Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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POLL RESULTS

Which tandem will you vote for in the runoff election?

Ben/Eloy **187**

Heinz/Arnold **210**

Sunday, November 15, 2009

PANDEMIC ALERT STATUS

PHASE 6

As of November 13, 2009

Phase 6: The pandemic phase, is an indication that a global pandemic is underway.

For more information about the H1N1 flu, contact DPH at 236-8797, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, 234-8950 during after hours, e-mail cnmipheoc@gmail.com, or visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/.

Source: CNMI Department of Public Health, World Health Organization

INSIDE

H1N1 Toll

Estimates of deaths caused by the swine flu have grown to nearly 4,000 since April.

HEALTH AND FITNESS... Page 17

Fact Check

Sarah Palin's book reprises claims from the 2008 campaign that haven't become any truer over time.

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Scholarship Board chair quits position. **PAGE 3**

OIA issues grant for Prior Service Trust Fund. **PAGE 8**

Petition for 'green cards' begins

Ahead of federal decision on immigration status of guest workers

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

RELATED NEWS

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A petition seeking "green cards" or lawful permanent resident status for foreign workers and others with relatives who are U.S. or Freely Associated States citizens has started circulating ahead of the May 10, 2010, deadline for Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to recommend to Congress whether a grant of permanent immigration status to nonresidents in the CNMI is necessary.

Doromal

The Coalition of United Workers-NMI started circulating the petition on Nov. 9 but temporarily halted it to prioritize the issue of securing umbrella permits for "overstayers," its president, Rene Reyes, said yesterday.

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Hawaii's famed white beaches are shrinking

By AUDREY McAVOY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

KAILUA, Hawaii (AP)—Jenn Boneza remembers when the white sandy beach near the boat ramp in her

See HAWAII'S on Page 4

This Nov. 6, 2009 photo shows footprints on Lanikai beach located on Oahu's windward side in Hawaii. AP

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

A four-way lane along Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road is reduced to two to give way to an ongoing Commonwealth Utilities Corp. sewer project. CUC said the status of Saipan's decades-old sewer system is another looming disaster that has the real potential of developing into a public health emergency. HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Pacquiao stops Cotto

Manny Pacquiao with trainer Freddie Roach. AP

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Manny Pacquiao put on yet another dominating performance Saturday night, knocking down Miguel Cotto twice and turning his face into a bloody mess before finally stopping him at 55 seconds of the 12th round.

See story on Page 28

CHC fills critical posts: 31 doctors, 235 nurses now on board

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Department of Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez disclosed Friday that new doctors and staff nurses have been hired recently to fill various critical posts at the hospital.

He said the hospital has a total of 31 physicians and 235 nurses on board as of last week.

Villagomez said three of the 31 doctors were recently hired and more will be coming in the next weeks.

Included in the total doctors popula-

See CHC on Page 4

Local

WSR names six outstanding employees of the year

MONETH G. DEPOSA

The six outstanding awardees of William S. Reyes Elementary School. From left are Support Staff of the Year awardee Delfin Lubao, Teacher Aide of the Year Ray Aguon, School Administrator of the Year Lynnette Villagomez, Teacher of the Year Dorina Salavaria, Support Staff of the Year Josie Mikel, and Counselor of the Year awardee Rebecca Flores.

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune
REPORTER

William S. Reyes Elementary School named six individuals as its outstanding employees this year. The six will vie for the Public School System's islandwide search for overall awardees this month.

Dorina Salavaria, 30, topped the elite group as the school's Teacher of the Year honoree while Ray Aguon emerged as WSR's Teacher Aide of the Year awardee.

Two employees were also lauded for their outstanding performances as Support Staff of the Year: Josie Mikel from the administration office and Delfin Lubao from the maintenance department.

School principal Lynnette Villagomez and Rebecca Flores were also adjudged as this year's Administrator and Counselor of the Year awardees.

This is the first time PSS will be recognizing the last two categories for Education Month.

Dorina Salavaria has been a teacher for five years at WSR. Although she was first nominated for the same honor last year, this was her first time to actually bag the award and represent the school in the overall competition.

"I am so honored because we have so many good teachers here," she told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that all 60 teachers in WSR deserve the same recognition

Salavaria is known for being persistent and orderly.

"I prioritize student learning and I share resources with everyone. I am also open to my students and my colleagues," she said.

Like Salavaria, it was a first time for Ray Aguon to be chosen as the school's Teacher Aide of the Year. He has been serving students for 10 years now. Aguon spent his first six years at the Oleai Elementary School as a teacher aide and was chosen for the same honor once.

As a Physical Education teacher aide, Aguon said he enjoys every moment of time he spends with students.

Josie Mikel, one of the Support Staff awardees, has been working for WSR for over a year now. As the school secretary, she assists not only the administrators and teachers but provides support to students and their parents.

Although surprised, she said the recognition is a great honor for her.

Counselor, school administrator awardees

Rebecca Flores, prior to becoming this year's Counselor of the Year awardee, has been named for other recognitions in the past.

Flores started as a WSR teacher in 1990 and was named the school's Teacher of the Year awardee in 1996.

When she became a school counselor, she was voted as WSR's Support Staff of the Year in 2003. Last year, WSR named her again as its best support staffer.

"It feels good to be recognized because that acknowledges the importance of one's work," she told *Saipan Tribune.*

Principal Lynne Villagomez also expressed her delight upon learning of the recognition.

"Just representing the school as an administrator is really an honor. It helps show the message that what I do everyday is really for the students and for all the employees of WSR," she said, adding that she will continue to work hard for her students.

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Scholarship Board chair quits position

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
Moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After over three years of serving Commonwealth students, the chairwoman of the CNMI Scholarship Board has quit her post, citing "personal reasons."

Lynnette Villagomez confirmed her resignation on Friday, saying her letter is already with the Governor's Office.

Villagomez, who is also the principal of the William S. Reyes Elementary School, cited in her letter to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial the "conflict" that she inevitably faces with her job as a scholarship board chair and her role as a school administrator.

Villagomez said her job as chairwoman of the scholarship board was very challenging.

"It was very challenging because we try to work together for the benefit of our children and it was just very difficult when the board's expectations and the community's expectations are not aligned. But what we have done or did was really for the benefit of children. …There's no self-interest involved," she told *Saipan Tribune.*

Villagomez said the board under her leadership had many accomplishments.

She, however, has only one expectation of the board and the current administrators of the Scholarship Office. This is to aggressively collect from former scholars the obligation that they "simply ignored."

She said more than $4 million is still owed by former scholars to the CNMI government.

"What I want to see happening at the Scholarship Office is to really go back to the students who graduated and to collect their obligations under the agreement," she said.

Villagomez admitted that many students who graduated abroad find jobs elsewhere and simply ignore the agreement they signed with the Scholarship Office.

She said that, with the current state of the economy, the CNMI may not have enough funds for students in the future.

"We have more than $4 million worth of receivables and although some are really diligent in paying their obligation, many of the previous scholars who already found jobs abroad are not fulfilling their obligations," she said.

Every year, the government provides $3 million for the scholarship programs.

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HAWAII'S

From Page 1

hometown was wide enough for people to build sand castles.

"It really used to be a beautiful beach," said the 35-year-old mother of two. "And now when you look at it, it's gone."

What's happening to portions of the beach in Kailua—a sunny coastal suburb of Honolulu where President Barack Obama spent his last two family vacations in the islands—is being repeated around the Hawaiian Islands.

Geologists say more than 70 percent of Kauai's beaches are eroding while Oahu has lost a quarter of its sandy shoreline. They warn the problem is only likely to get significantly worse in coming decades as global warming causes sea levels to rise more rapidly.

"It will probably have occurred to a scale that we will have only been able to save a few places and maintain beaches, and the rest are kind of a write-off," said Dolan Eversole, a coastal geologist with the University of Hawaii's Sea Grant program.

The loss of so many beaches is an alarming prospect for Hawaii on many levels. Many tourists come to Hawaii precisely because they want to lounge on and walk along its soft sandy shoreline. These visitors spend some $11.4 billion each year, making tourism the state's largest employer.

Disappearing sands would also wreak havoc on the environment as many animals and plants would lose important habitats. The Hawaiian monk seal, an endangered species, gives birth and nurses pups on beaches. The green sea turtle, a threatened species, lays eggs in the sand.

Chip Fletcher, a University of Hawaii geology professor, says scientists in Hawaii haven't yet observed an accelerated rate of sea level rise due to global warming.

Instead, the erosion the islands are experiencing now is caused by several factors including a steady historical climb in sea levels that likely dates back to the 19th century.

Other causes include storms and human actions like the construction of seawalls, jetties, and the dredging of stream mouths. Each of these human actions disrupts the natural flow of sand.

But a more rapid rise in sea levels, caused by global warming, is expected to contribute to erosion in Hawaii within decades. In 100 years, sea levels are likely to be at least 1 meter, or 3.3 feet, higher than they are now, pushing the ocean inland along coastal areas.

Fletcher says between 60 to 80 percent of the nation's shoreline is chronically eroding. But the problem is felt particularly acutely in Hawaii because the economy and lifestyle are so dependent on healthy beaches.

The state is doing everything it can to keep the sand in Waikiki, for example, joining with hotels in the state's tourist hub on a plan to spend between $2 million and $3 million pumping in sand from offshore.

Sam Lemmo, administrator of the state's Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands, says the state would need a variety of adaptation strategies for different beaches.

It would likely have to abandon hope for beaches in posh Lanikai and suburban Ewa Beach on Oahu because they're already lined with seawalls and are badly eroded.

The same probably goes for shoreline next to highways or other critical public infrastructure, where seawalls already exist or may have to be built.

Seawalls protect individual properties from encroaching waters but they exacerbate erosion nearby by preventing waves from reaching the sand needed to replenish the beach.

For undeveloped shoreline, the state wants to make sure these areas stay pristine. This happened recently when a Florida-based developer announced plans to build luxury homes on sand dunes in Kahuku on Oahu's North Shore.

"We just kind of went nuts, pulled out all the guns on that one, basically got them to back off," Lemmo said. "We're working pretty hard to keep any new development away from these areas."

The University of Hawaii's Sea Grant program is working with a consultant to develop a beach management plan for Kailua that would address how to deal with a 1 meter rise in sea level. The state hopes this will be the first of many site-specific management plans for Hawaii's beaches.

A "triage," strategy could be applied to Kailua, which is lined by multimillion-dollar homes but doesn't have seawalls.

Fletcher proposes identifying areas where a land conservation fund would buy five or six adjoining properties. The state would tear down buildings on these plots and allow the beach to shift inland.

He said when erosion hits more sections of Kailua beach, there's going to be a clamor to put up seawalls.

"That will be a very important moment," Fletcher said. "If we allow the first home to put up a seawall, then we're probably dooming the entire beach over the course of a couple of decades . . .

Ultimately the beach will disappear. Or we could have an alternative to that, to identify now some portions of Kailua shoreline where we want the beach to live."

CHC

From Page 1

tion at present are part-time physicians from private health clinics.

Villagomez assured, however, that the hospital's key departments such as the emergency room, surgery, internal medicine, and intensive care units have full-time physicians.

"Right now, we have 31 doctors and, if we work closely with private health care providers, we probably don't need much," Villagomez said. The CHC needs 43 doctors to be fully staffed.

Of the current 235 nurses, 12 were hired in the last six months.

"I think we only have two available FTEs for nurses as we speak," he said, adding that the hospital has a lot of applicants for nurses.

The Governor's Office has placed the hospital under a state of emergency due to the lack of needed physicians and health care providers.

Villagomez said that CHC may have had a number of doctors and nurses who had quit in previous months, but he emphasized that recruitment for their replacements is ongoing and the department has been successful in getting many qualified candidates.

He said CHC just doesn't have the time to do the "press releases" to announce the new hires.

Villagomez said the main reason for the resignation of many hospital employees in the past was "better opportunities" elsewhere but DPH and the administration are now addressing these "concerns."

Nonresidents nurses

Villagomez admitted that, of the 235 nurses onboard, 70 to 75 percent of them are working without a U.S. visa. Thus, federalization may impact the hospital's services, he added.

"The reality is…CNMI health care will collapse if they [foreign nurses] are not given [consideration] by U.S. immigration," he said.

U.S. labor and immigration officials are scheduled to implement federal labor and immigration laws in the CNMI on Nov. 28 this year.

Villagomez said that DPH has begun negotiating with U.S. Immigration to consider the situation of the hospital's professional health care providers.

"We have begun our dialog with U.S. Immigration and I have a good faith that we will come to an agreement to retain our nurses here," he said.

Main components

Villagomez said his department is almost done with the new regulations that will govern the hiring of personnel for the hospital and he will be meeting with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to discuss its components.

Villagomez disclosed that three requirements are needed to lift the emergency declaration at CHC: licensing, recruitment, and working with the private sector.

The secretary said the department needs to communicate with the licensing board so the agency can hire foreign licensed physicians to address its doctor shortage, fix the salary issues and benefits for them, and collaborate with the private health sector.

He disclosed that a new salary compensation/pay scale is being finalized for adoption.

"I think that, with the new packet that we're putting now, we can retain and hire qualified doctors and staff for our hospital," he said.

Villagomez described the "plan" as a long-term solution to the hospital's problems.

PETITION

From Page 1

Reyes said they will resume the signature drive later this week.

Florida-based human rights activist and former Rota teacher Wendy Doromal started the online petition on Saturday, and expects to gather at least 5,000 signatures by January 2010.

"This is our last major push before the May 10, 2010, recommendation from the secretary of Interior to Congress regarding granting United States citizenship or some other permanent legal status to the nonresidents," Doromal told *Saipan Tribune* when asked for comment.

The petition is addressed to President Obama, members of the U.S. Congress, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, Labor Secretary Hilda Solis and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano.

As of 4pm Sunday, the online petition has gathered 69 signatures.

Ronnie Doca, board chairman of the United Workers Movement-NMI, said yesterday they will begin the signature drive on Tuesday, 6pm, at the Fiesta Pilipino by Juvy restaurant across the road from Saipan Grand Hotel in Susupe.

Doromal and the two organizations of foreign workers in the CNMI are using the same petition form.

CNRA requirement

The federal government will take over CNMI immigration on Nov. 28 pursuant to Public Law 110-229 or the Consolidated Natural Resources Act, signed by President George W. Bush on May 8, 2008.

The CNRA requires the Interior secretary, in consultation with the Homeland Security secretary and the governor of the CNMI, to recommend to the U.S. Congress, as the secretary deems appropriate, a permanent immigration status to guest workers legally residing in the CNMI, by May 10, 2010.

Also included in the Interior's report are the numbers of aliens residing in the CNMI, a description of their legal status under federal law, the number of years each alien has been residing in the CNMI, and the current and future requirements of the local economy for an alien workforce.

Improved status

Over the last three years, Doromal has hand-delivered petitions and letters to the U.S. Congress and offices in Washington, D.C., seeking improved status for many in the CNMI.

The quest for improved immigration status, as the petition reads, is for foreign contract workers, CNMI permanent residents and their nonresident spouses, FAS citizens and their nonresident spouses and family members, nonresidents who are married to U.S. citizens, widows and widowers of U.S. citizens, U.S. citizen children of nonresidents, foreign-born children of U.S. citizens and nonresidents, and parents of disabled and special needs U.S. citizen children.

The FAS includes Palau, the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia (Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae).

Doromal said she and her daughter Nani will personally deliver written letters and the written petition that is circulating in the CNMI to Congress and offices in Washington, D.C. at the end of January after Congress is back in session.

"I will submit the online petition when we reach or surpass our goal," she added.

Doromal said she has notified friends at non-profit organizations that support human rights, social justice, and immigration reform to appeal for nationwide support.

"Some of my friends are writing stories to post on major progressive Web sites, and we are creating a Facebook page. I am also reaching out to the media to appeal for support," she added.

Pathway to US citizenship

Doromal said some people mistakenly assume that it is only the nonresidents who support status for the residents of the CNMI.

"This is not true. Millions of Americans believe that all guest worker programs should provide a pathway to citizenship. I put the petition online so that people from across the United States can sign it. The U.S. officials that the petition seeks to influence will see that the support comes not just from the people in the CNMI, but from coast to coast across our nation. The petition has only been up for about five hours and we have people signing from not just the CNMI, but from Florida, Virginia, Georgia, New York, Missouri, Tennessee, South Carolina, Texas, California, Oregon, and Connecticut," she said.

The online petition is posted on Doromal's blog, "Unheard No More," at http://unheardnomore.blogspot.com.

"We support the nonresidents of the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in their quest for green cards and a pathway to citizenship as expressed in this petition. We appeal to you to take immediate action to secure their standing and to keep their families together," the petition's introductory paragraph reads.

The federalization law establishes a goal of phasing out the CNMI guest worker program and requires a report from the Department of the Interior as to the number of guest workers in the CNMI, and recommendations for status, if any.

"There is no assurance that there will be recommendations for status, nor any assurance that status would be granted through subsequent legislation even if such recommendations were made. We appeal to you today to support the introduction of legislation that would grant green cards and a pathway to citizenship to long-term foreign workers and nonresidents," the petitioners say.

Majority of foreign workers—now only at a little over 10,000—have been in the CNMI for more

"Many of us have children who serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. We are valuable workers and law-abiding, contributing members of our island home. We call upon you to provide protection and equal rights to those of us who have dedicated our lives to building and developing this great U.S. commonwealth," the petition reads.

In 2000, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed legislation that would have provided these segments of the CNMI population with immigration status.

However, a provision for U.S. status did not make it into the final version of the bill that would become part of Public Law 110-229 or the CNRA.

"While we understand that permanent status and a pathway to citizenship for us in the CNMI may be included in future national comprehensive immigration reform legislation, we plead with you not to wait," it adds.

The petition cited a precedent for such a relief. In the 1980s, the Virgin Islands and the U.S. Congress realized that special legislation was needed to prevent the separation of guest workers from their U.S. citizen families. Congress passed a law allowing guest workers in the Virgin Islands to adjust to permanent residency status.

"Congress should pass a similar law tailored to the unique needs of the CNMI," the petitioners say.

Doromal said foreigners invited to U.S. shores to work and build the economy "should be regarded as future citizens rather than replaceable commodities."

"Those who support a just and democratic guest worker program in the CNMI and in the mainland, support opportunities where foreign workers and immigrants have control over their destiny and the destiny of their families. They embrace the words of President Barack Obama: 'In America, no dream is beyond your grasp if you reach for it, and fight for it, and work for it,'" she added.

'Law meant to protect citizens from wage depression'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

One of the fundamental purposes of the U.S. immigration law is to protect U.S. citizens from wage depression resulting from the presence of inexpensive nonresident labor, according to the federal government.

The U.S. government, through Office of Immigration Litigation trial attorney Theodore W. Atkinson, said the other fundamental purpose of the U.S. immigration law is to ensure that U.S. citizens have access to local job opportunities.

Atkinson highlighted these points in the U.S. government's amended response to the CNMI government's supplemental memorandum in support of a motion for a preliminary injunction against the federalization law.

Atkinson said the CNMI's assertion that "immigration" laws do not include nonresident labor and foreign workforce regulations ignores large sections of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and is contradicted by the two fundamental purposes of immigration law.

The CNMI argues that the provisions governing the permitting of nonresident workers do not fall under the category of "immigration" laws.

The CNMI asserts that the Department of Homeland Security's interim permit rule is "labor" and not "immigration" as shown when the interim permit rule was promulgated separately from the second set of regulations (interim conforming amendments) issued on Oct. 28, 2009.

But Atkinson said this argument is "without merit."

"There can be little dispute that the regulations at issue serve separate purposes. As DHS noted in issuing the interim rule, the Interim Permit Rule was implemented to 'create a new, temporary, CNMI-only transitional worker classification (CW classification) in accordance with the Consolidated Natural Resources Act," he said.

The interim conforming amendments, on the other hand, were promulgated to amend existing immigration regulations covering various areas, Atkinson said.

These areas include asylum and credible fear determinations, the definition of "United States" and its territories and possessions, and the Guam-CNMI Visa-Waiver Program.

Indeed, Atkinson said, several of the amendments cover employment-based regulations that, if one follows the CNMI's logic, would fall outside the area of "immigration" law and tread into "labor" law.

He said these include conforming regulations providing that, "upon the transition program's effective date, employers and certain recruiters and referrers for a fee in the CNMI will be subject to the same prohibitions as other employers in the U.S. against knowingly employing aliens who are not authorized to work in the United States."

"They also include regulations that require employers in the CNMI to follow rules regarding the verification of employment authorization, and apply hiring prohibitions to employers in the CNMI," he said.

Atkinson said that DHS issuing one interim rule to create the nonresident worker permitting system and another to make it conform to existing regulations is unremarkable, and not evidence that the CNRA's transitional nonresident work permit system is not part of federal immigration law.

The CNMI wants the court to stop the implementation and enforcement of the interim rule and to issue a preliminary injunction that would bar DHS from enforcing or implementing the interim permit rule pending the court's ruling on the Commonwealth's lawsuit.

Man allegedly beats up wife as she's breastfeeding their baby

A 27-year-old man is facing charges in court after he allegedly beat up his common-law wife while she was breastfeeding their baby.

Brigido Itibus Ilo, 27, was charged with assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, assault, and disturbing the peace.

Police said the victim sustained a swollen forehead, bruises on the elbow and knee, scratches on the neck and arm, and a cut on the left ear. She was shaking and crying in fear when police officers responded.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo imposed a $15,000 cash bail for Ilo's temporary liberty. Preliminary hearing is tomorrow, Nov. 17, at 1:30pm.

The victim told police that on Nov. 6 at 6pm she, Ilo, and their children were at a family residence in Dandan where Ilo was drinking with family members.

Once they got home at 3am, Ilo accused his wife of having an affair with a family member. Ilo then allegedly threw a can of beer, hitting the victim on the forehead.

Later, as the victim was breastfeeding their baby, Ilo allegedly punched her several times, pushed her to the wall, pulled her hair, and threatened to kill her with a machete.

Ilo then took both children and left the house.

Medics transported the victim to the Commonwealth Health Center. While police were interviewing the victim, Ilo showed up. Police arrested him. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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NMI takes part in workshop to develop islands' GDP

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Nikolao Pula, left, director of the Office of Insular Affairs, joins representatives from the CNMI, American Samoa, Freely Associated States, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands in a weeklong session with officials from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Office of Insular Affairs in Honolulu, Hawaii.

WAIKIKI, Hawaii—A team of CNMI government officials from the Department of Commerce and the Department of Finance, along with representatives from American Samoa, Freely Associated States, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands participated in a weeklong session with officials from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Office of Insular Affairs in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The participants were welcomed by Nikolao Pula, director of the Office of Insular Affairs, who stressed the importance of the gathering.

The session was aimed at the collection of data required for the development of the island areas' Gross Domestic Product. The GDP is a measurement of the economic health used to determine the direction of change of an economic jurisdiction within a specified period of time.

"Without a GDP measure, it becomes very difficult to quantify the direction of the economy. It is common for people to generalize that the economy is in bad shape, but no one can quantify to what extent. This measure is important as it provides data on which way our economy is moving and to what extent the change is year-over-year," said CNMI Commerce Secretary Michael Ada.

The National Income and Products Accounts are accounts developed and used by the Bureau of Economic Analysis to develop the final results of the National GDP, as they are one of the primary sources of data on economic activity in the nation. All of the insular areas have gone without a GDP measure to date; however, efforts have been ongoing since early 2005 to develop such a measure. Due to the small size and economic anomalies that exist within the island areas, it has been difficult to utilize the national GDP measures and apply them to the island areas.

"This session was very helpful as it allowed the island governments to understand what data is important for the BEA to collect in order to arrive at the GDP's for each of the jurisdictions. We were able to provide wage data, sales revenues, and other economic data to aid the BEA in their analysis and calculations," said Marie Muña, of the Electronic Data Processing Division of the CNMI Department of Finance.

The CNMI was required to make a presentation that discussed the data from the CNMI's audited financial statements, wage data, and gross receipts data. The CNMI team was required to address several questions from federal officials with regards to CNMI relevant data.

"We answered questions and provided information relevant to Private Consumption Expenditures, Income data, and Governmental Expenditures. We were able to ask questions and listen to detailed analysis from BEA economists, as well as answer many of their questions as to operations and finances within the CNMI," said Vivian Nogis from the Division of Customs Service.

The Office of Insular Affairs provided the CNMI with a technical assistance grant to cover the cost to send four CNMI officials to Honolulu, Hawaii for the event. According to Canice Diaz of the Division of Revenue and Taxation, all islands were appreciative of the OIA for its support of this effort.

"It was beneficial to work alongside the other insular areas to understand the commonalities and differences within the areas. It was also helpful to speak directly with the people who are working to assist the islands in developing their GDP," said Diaz. ***(PR)***

Sister takes custody of woman in 'ice' case

The federal court has allowed a woman to act as a third-party custodian for her sister, who is facing trafficking methamphetamine or "ice" charges.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson on Friday ordered that Jolene Benavente shall be the temporary third-party custodian for Sharee Demapan Diaz.

Munson said that once Ana Castro, mother of Diaz, returns from her off-island travel, Castro shall resume her duties as third-party custodian for the defendant.

Castro is leaving for the U.S. mainland for two weeks.

"In the interim, Ms. Benavente has all the rights and obligations of the third-party custodian," Munson said.

A third-party custodian is an individual willing to assume responsibilities for a criminal defendant who is detained or on bail pending criminal proceedings.

Drug Enforcement Administration agents arrested Diaz and Jawn Joyner last month after the U.S. government filed a complaint charging the two with conspiracy to distribute "ice."

The complaint also charged Joyner and Diaz with three counts of possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute. DEA said Diaz was Joyner's retail seller, runner and intermediary. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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Congressman-Elect (P4) George N. Camacho
Congressman-Elect (P5) Frederick P. Guerrero
Covenant Candidate Henry K. Rabauliman

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Congresswoman-Elect Teresita A. Santos
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Water outage set in parts of Saipan

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers along Tasi Drive and Fiesta Street in the Dandan II, Phase II areas will have a water outage on Wednesday, Nov. 18, from 8am to 5pm. The outage is necessary to allow CUC contractor Arch Structure Corp. to connect new mainlines to the existing distribution system to extend water services into these areas. Customers in these areas will have intermittent service disruptions as the contractor completes the connection work. On Thursday, Nov. 19, customers in these areas can expect low water pressure.

Residents are encouraged to practice strict water conservation and to teach children and household workers to save water, especially during this period. Rainwater catchment system/ water tanks should be cleaned and float valves installed or replaced to ensure that water does not overflow from any tanks. ***(CUC)***

OIA issues grant for Prior Service Trust Fund

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Department of the Interiors' Insular Assistant Secretary, Tony Babauta, made available $1 million to support the Prior Service Trust Fund Administration.

The PSTFA administers benefit payments to individuals in the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau who worked for the U.S. Department of the Navy and the U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The program is designed to provide social security-type benefits to former employees of the TTPI government (or the predecessor-U.S. Navy administration) who were employed for at least five full years prior to 1968, when a TTPI Social Security System was created. The program also provides benefits to survivors of the former employees.

"The benefits we are able to provide are clearly only a small measure of the gratitude we have for the men and women of Micronesia and the Marianas who helped support the U.S. military as it made its way across the Pacific Islands during World War II," said Babauta.

In the last days of the war, Micronesians started working for the U.S. military. These people were paid very low meager salaries, often as low as 9 cents an hour, with no employee benefits.

In June 2009, a census of beneficiaries was conducted, revealing 359 beneficiaries in the CNMI, 753 in the FSM, 236 in the RMI, and 319 in the Republic of Palau. ***(OIA)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman, hereby gives notice to the general public that the Board will hold a Regular Meeting on Thursday, November 19, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the NMHC Conference Room in Garapan, Saipan. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES: September 24, 2009 – Special Meeting

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

V. MORTGAGE CREDIT PROGRAMS
A. Loans for Board Concurrence
1. HOME New Construction
2. HOME Rehabilitation
B. Loan Revisions and Conversions
1 HOME Program
2 DFHL Program
3. USDA/NMHC Partnership Program
C. Other Matters

VI. PROGRAM & HOUSING
A. REAC
B. SEMAP

VII. FISCAL AFFAIRS
A. Financial Statement
B. FY 2009-2010 Audit Proposals
C. Electronic Submission for Audited Financial Reporting

VIII. OTHER MATTERS
A. Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)
B. Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)

IX. ADJOURNMENT

NOTE: Pursuant to PL 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in Executive Session.

/s/ MARCIE M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman of the Board

NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity lender and employer.

Saipan Cockfight Board

Municipality of Saipan
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, subsection 9910, Mayor Juan B. Tudela, through the Municipality of Saipan, hereby gives notice that the Saipan Cockfight Board will hold its regular meeting on Thursday, November 19, 2009, at 5:30 p. m. at the Marianas Cockfight Dome in As Gonno, Saipan:

I. Preliminary Matters
a. Call to Order
b. Roll Call
c. Adoption of Agenda

II. Public Comments

III. New Business
1. Protest filed by Mr. Henry Galera
2. Protest filed by Mr. Eduardo Galang
3. Adoption of New Saipan Cockfight Regulations

IV. Executive Session

V. Miscellaneous
a. Announcements
b. Next meeting
c. Adjournment

Northern Mariana Islands RETIREMENT FUND

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, §9910, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees/Workers' Compensation Commission/Group Health & Life Insurance Trust Fund, are hereby giving notice that the Board of Trustees will hold its Regular meeting Thursday, November 19, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the NMI Retirement Fund Conference Room, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda
D. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting:
1. June 4, 2009
2. September 22, 2009
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. REPORTS
A. Report of the Chairman
1. ROC No. 10-002
B. Report of the Administrator / Correspondence
1. ROA No. 10-002
a) Status Updates
C. Report of the Comptroller
1. Financials
a) NMI Retirement Fund
b) GHLITF
c) WCC
2. Drawdown Requests
3. CGECU Status Update
D. Reports of the Committees
1. Finance & Investment Committee
2. Operations & Personnel Committee
3. Policies, Programs & Legislative Review Committee
4. GH&L and WCC Committee
a) GH&L and WCC Report No. 09-003
E. Report of the Investment Director
1. Status of Investment/Market Condition
2. Report of the Housing Loan Program
F. Communications
1. Internal Auditor Reports
G. Other Matters
IV. LEGAL MATTERS
A. Reports of the Legal Counsels
1. Report of the Board Counsel
a) Lawsuit
i) Report of the Post Judgment Negotiation Panel
ii) Other Legal Matters
2. Report of the In-House Counsel
a) Update on Administrative Appeals
3. Report of the Hearing Officer
V. OLD BUSINESS
1. BR 08-001 Matters
a) Pension Application Matters
b) P.L. 15-98 / Refunds
c) Disability Applicants
2. Administrative Hearing Officer Selection
3. Collection Attorney
4. Investment Consulting Services
5. MHL-Bank Pacific
VI. NEW BUSINESS
1. Administrator Authority to Emergency Contract for Life Insurance Coverage
VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
VIII. MISCELLANEOUS
A. Announcements
B. Next Meeting
C. Adjournment

/s/ SIXTO K. IGISOMAR
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Nov. 16, 1999

Tanapag residents eye class action suit

Some Tanapag residents are considering the filing of a class action suit against the U.S. Department of Defense for the contamination of the village with cancer-causing polychlorinated biphenyls and dioxin. These hazardous chemicals, left by American troops in 1960s, are being blamed by residents for a number of unusual diseases that have plagued the community, as well as for the destruction of the environment. According to former Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Benigno M. Sablan, he was given authority by 24 residents to tap the services of lawyers who would help them in the legal battle against DOD. He said the lawsuit may also include the Office of Insular Affairs, CNMI government, and the Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

Manglona keeps Senate presidency

For the second time in a row, Senate President Paul A. Manglona will keep his position as presiding officer of the upper house when the 12th Legislature convenes next year. The Rota senator was reelected into a new four-year term during the Nov. 6 midterm polls. There is no major changes in the Senate leadership where Republicans corner six seats of the nine-member legislative chamber. Aside from the stunning defeat of Sen. Juan P. "Morgen" Tenorio who lost his re-election bid on Saipan, seven members will join the next legislature. Former Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Executive Director Ramon S. "Kumoi" Guerrero is so far the only newcomer to the Senate after winning one of Saipan seats in the last elections.

Nov. 16, 2000

NMC: Pay now or else

A percentage of Northern Marianas College students stand to forfeit their chances of completing their two-year college degrees beginning next semester should they ignore the NMC Business Office's warning to start fulfilling their financial liabilities to the college. The college has vowed to step up its tuition collection in renewed efforts to recover close to $3 million unpaid fees. Contemplating a possible decrease in student enrollment, the Business Office said it is set to implement more stringent tuition payment terms that will compel students to pay up or relinquish the privilege to avail of NMC's services.

Microloan raises women's participation in business

Implementation of the Microloan Program by the Commonwealth Development Authority resulted in the increased participation of local women in the business sector, Board Chair John S. Tenorio said yesterday. Of the 14 microloans sealed by the CNMI government's lending arm in financial year 2000, six were issued to women-owned businesses, Mr. Tenorio said during the formal closing of additional loans for the program with the U.S. Small Business Administration. CDA's ability to improve CNMI women's participation in the business sector earned for it an award from the Guam-based SBA, placing second to Bank of Hawaii as among the year's best lenders throughout the Northern Marianas.

Nov. 16, 2001

Tinian underscores benefits of recycling

The Tinian Municipal Council passed seven municipal resolutions during a regular session on November 13, several of which will be forwarded to the Tinian Legislative Delegation for review and action. Council chairman Juanita M. Mendiola introduced a resolution addressing the ongoing Tinian Landfill Project. Municipal Resolution 8-049 outlined the need for a comprehensive plan for reducing waste and reusing, recycling and composting materials as part of the $3.2-million landfill relocation project.

JASTA helps raise funds for MVA's recovery campaign

As part of the Marianas Visitors Authority's Emergency Recovery Plan for the CNMI, the Japan-Saipan Travel Association will hold an Industry Walk-a-thon tomorrow, Saturday. The Gambaro walk-a-thon will start at the Minachom Atdao starting at 6am, JASTA President Ikuo Katayama said yesterday. Katayama urged officials of local businesses, private associations and government agencies to participate in the Gambaro Walk-a-Thon, to show their support for the MVA's recovery campaign. The Gambaro, which means goodluck, was organized to show the local businesses' commitment to the tourism industry as well as travel sector-related businesses.

Plans finalized for AMIM scholarships for NMI students

The Association of the CNMI Municipal Council members from Saipan, Tinian and Rota met last week at the Saipan Municipal Council chamber and finalized plans for the first academic postsecondary and trades academy scholarships underwritten by the Association of Mariana Islands Mayors, Vice Mayors, & Elected Municipal Council members to CNMI residents.

AMIM intends to issue the award notice by the end of December.

The AMIM-funded scholarship is generated from annual AMIM membership dues. The municipal council members of Saipan, Tinian and Rota are official voting members in the Guam-based local government association.

The Friday announcement fulfills the vision of then Mayor Isabel Haggard of Guam, considered the architect of the AMIM scholarship some ten years ago.

When the idea of a scholarship was first placed on the AMIM agenda in 2004, the program was focused on the development and advancement of the workforce of the member residents. At the time, the association pledged to allocate certain percentage of the association fees to address areas that would advance the culture, linguistics and history of the Mariana Islands, inclusive of studies on tourism and agriculture.

The trades areas were not included in the original plan then.

Only last year at the AMIM general assembly on Rota when the association voted to include trades studies as part of the scholarship as spearheaded by 10th Saipan Municipal Council vice chair Ramon B. Camacho and Association of CNMI Council president Felipe Atalig and supported by chair Antonia Tudela of Saipan, along with council members: vice chair Charlene M. Lizama, chair Antonio H. Borja and secretary Eugene L. Villagomez from Tinian and chair Roy Masga, vice chair Alfred Apatang and secretary Vincent Calvo from Rota.

The proposed scholarship is restricted to residents of the Mariana Islands who are U.S. citizens from Guam, Rota, Tinian and Saipan. The applicant must also be on his/her third and fourth year of undergraduate studies.

Guam is allocated $2,000 while the CNMI $1,000 each for Rota, Tinian and Saipan per academic year. The use of the scholarship is strictly for tuition, related fees or books only.

A recipient must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale and be on full-time status in college.

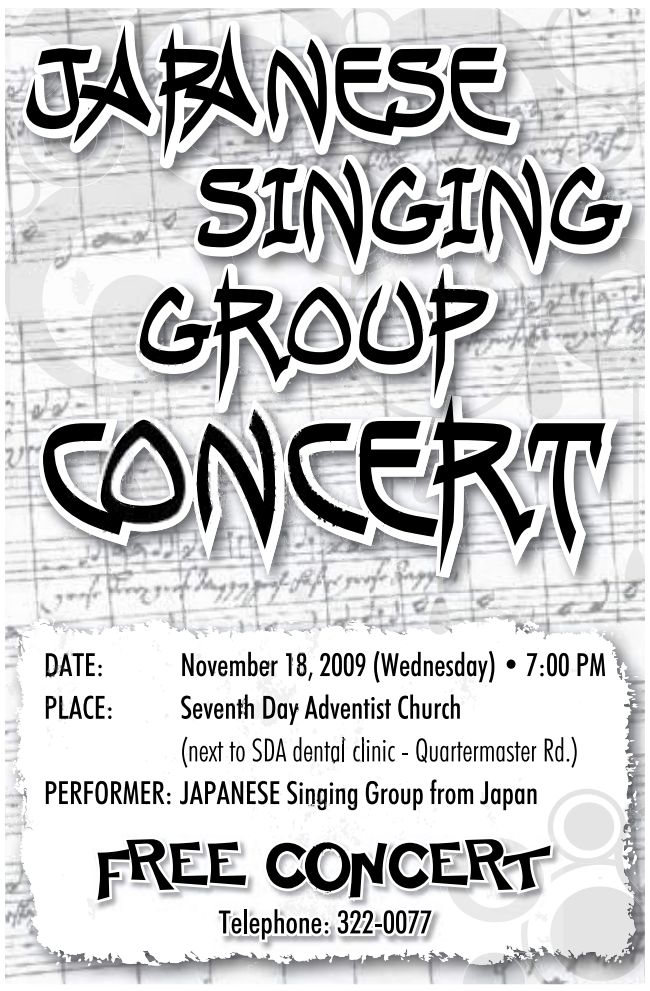
Applicants are required to obtain at least one letter of recommendation from the village mayor where the applicant is residing. Applicants from the CNMI, however, must obtain a letter of recommendation from the respective municipal council members of Saipan, Tinian and Rota. Extracurricular activities directly related to AMIM's priority studies will be weighed in the decision by the selection committee.

As the AMIM scholarship is not automatically renewed, a recipient must re-submit an application every academic year during his/her third and fourth year in college.

In return for the scholarship, recipients are required to pay back in services (equivalent to the value or worth of the scholarship award) to the respective AMIM communities for a minimum of six month. Services are to be performed not later than one year of receiving a scholarship from AMIM. This service is to be performed by the recipient before he/she even graduates from college. In this way, the recipient does not prolong his/her studies before performing the required services in the community.

The AMIM selection committee will begin receiving applications in Rota, Tinian and Saipan by the end of this month. ***(PR)***

Standing from left to right, Saipan Municipal Council vice chair Ramon B. Camacho, Tinian Municipal Council vice chair Charlene M. Lizama, Tinian Municipal Council executive director Joe San Nicolas, Tinian Municipal Council secretary Eugenio L. Villagomez, and Rota Municipal Council secretary Vince M. Calvo. Seated is Tinian Municipal Council chair Antonio H. Borja
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Ben & Eloy Stood Up for All of Us

CNMI'S SELF-GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMIC TOOLS ARE INSEPARABLE

Why must self-government for the People of the CNMI be defended? Self-government goes hand-in-hand with economic growth and development. Self-government and economic growth and development are inseparable, and those rights, without hesitation, at any cost, must be defended. It was wrong for the CNMI Legislature's Leadership to "watch" from the sidelines as the federal government erodes and destroys our ability to grow and develop our economy. Governor Ben Fitial is fighting hard for the CNMI to retain those rights and privileges. The lawsuit is absolutely necessary to keep our Covenant alive and our Commonwealth viable, intact and honorable.

Economic Tools: Absolutely, the CNMI's economic tools necessary to grow and develop our economy must be protected from subtle erosion and infringement by federal interference and/or by passage and application of selective federal laws that lead to limited and restricted economic growth and development. Governor Ben Fitial took the fight to Washington, D.C. to argue in the U.S. District Court to retain our economic tools necessary for self-sufficiency and self-government as guaranteed in our Covenant..

Ordinary Lawsuit with an Extra-Ordinary Purpose: It is not unusual or out of the ordinary to file a lawsuit against the federal government. Hundreds of lawsuits were filed against the federal government across the nation over the years. It is in the CNMI's best interest, rights and privileges to file a lawsuit in U.S. federal court against the federal government to protect and preserve its economic potentials for growth and development from being quashed, or restricted. Governor Ben Fitial did just that for all of us in the CNMI. The lawsuit filed by Governor Ben Fitial was an Ordinary Lawsuit with an Extra-Ordinary Purpose for all of us.

What is the rationale behind border protection and the federalization of the CNMI's labor and immigration? The federal government restricting tourists from visiting the CNMI from China while the states of New York and California competes with Europe and Canada to benefit from the millions of Chinese tourists traveling and spending surplus money overseas was simply wrong. The issue should focus on fairness. In other words, if the states can compete for the same clientele, then the CNMI is part and whole of the US political family and must not be denied what's given the states. China and Russia are located thousands of miles closer to the CNMI than the states of Hawaii, California and New York, all major tourist destinations. The distance from the mainland U.S. to the CNMI serves as a natural deterrent, and provides a buffer to protect the U.S. mainland's borders and national security. Additional guarantees may be included, as done through parole by the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, allowing Chinese and Russian tourists to travel to the CNMI with restrictions. It is wholly unfair for the federal government to deny the CNMI the privilege to compete for Chinese and Russian tourists given their close proximity to the CNMI solely on the basis of border protection and national security interests. Governor Ben Fitial rightfully and dutifully filed a lawsuit, including the recently filed motion for an injunction to ensure that the CNMI's self-government and economic interests were not violated.

The Legislature's Leadership controlled by Heinz and Arnold failed to stand up for self-government and defend our rights and privileges to grow and develop our economy. They stood, watched and criticized from the comfort of their offices while Governor Ben Fitial struggled to fund and fight for our rights in Washington, D.C.

Join Ben & Eloy: Heinz and Arnold promoted their own political agenda disguised in their political theme for Change. Change for what? HA's self-serving, Hidden Political agenda, covered in "sheepskin" was designed to fool the people. Let us join Governor Ben Fitial in defending our self-government and our rights and privileges to grow and develop our economy for future generations. Please vote on Monday, November 23, for Governor Ben Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy Inos.

Stick with Proven Experience and Proven Leadership to Guide and Build the CNMI.

Vote for Ben & Eloy.

Thank you for your vote of confidence.

Paid for by Republicans, Democrats and Independent Friends of Ben & Eloy.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Racing to education reform

Without spending a penny, Education Secretary Arne Duncan prodded states to take important, if small, steps toward school reform. Hoping to win funds from his forthcoming Race to the Top competition, states dismantled barriers to the use of student achievement data in assessing teachers, lifted caps on charter schools and raised standards for getting a teaching license. Given this achievement even before firing the starting gun in his race, Duncan is entitled to the benefit of the doubt when he says that only states committed to real innovation will be awarded federal dollars.

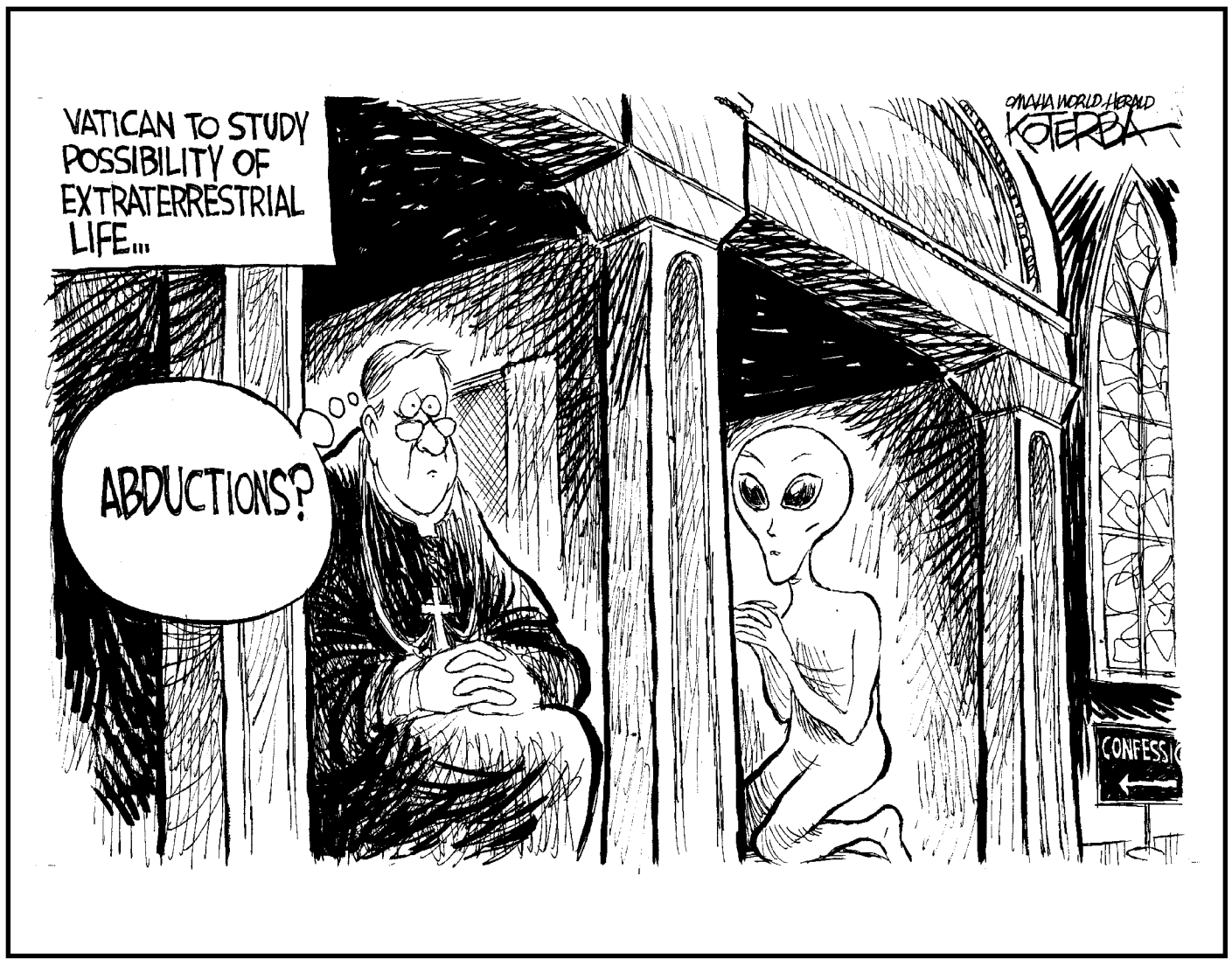
The first applications for these grants are due in mid-January, so final regulations were issued this week. A complex scoring system will be used to judge state applications, with an emphasis on rewarding those with effective reform agendas and with support from key stakeholders such as local school systems. Almost immediately, some reform groups—the Center for Education Reform and the Education Trust, for example—accused the administration of diluting its demands and weakening standards.

Concerns about potential loopholes are not misplaced; draft regulations have been weakened. But the administration did not abandon its core principles. Still in the rules is an insistence that student achievement be a significant factor in teacher and principal evaluations, that charter and other innovative schools be encouraged, that states take action to turn around failing schools and that states work toward national standards.

More important than parsing the language of the regulations will be the process used to evaluate applications. Some states, such as Colorado and Louisiana, seem be taking the mandates seriously, as they formed statewide coalitions to develop credible plans. Others seem more interested in gaming the system. Here, New York comes to mind with its ridiculous argument that it should qualify because its union-inspired law banning the use of student performance data applies to tenure and so technically is not a ban on use for evaluations—as if tenure were not the ultimate evaluation.

It's a coup for Duncan that he has managed to use $4 billion—a drop in the nation's bucket of education spending—to get much of the country talking about the need for reform. The real test, though, lies ahead in his ability to resist political pressure to spread the fund evenly and instead to target the money to states that are truly committed to reform.

(c) 2009, The Washington Post



Building skills for a lifetime at NMTI

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

A revolution in the labor market is taking place. More and more local men and women are being hired to replace our departing nonresident workforce. After reading this article, why not check with NMTI about the opportunities awaiting you and your friends. Remember, age, gender, and educational background is not important. The only important thing is that you want to learn a trade or a profession. Check it out. The revolution is getting bigger daily. Become a part of it. Will you still be working for minimum wages in two or three more years or will you become a skilled professional demanding a high salary?

The Northern Marianas Trades Institute is now almost one-and-a-half years old. It started in July 2008, housed in a small private residence. About 40 apprehensive students enrolled. Today November 2009, NMTI is housed in a 25,000 square foot building in Lower Base with about 145 students. Though the building is in dire need of remodeling, the students have immersed themselves in their courses. There is a feeling of vitality and determination sprinkled with large doses of hope of becoming a skilled professional tradesperson.

These young men and women are the promise of a skilled workforce capable of filling in the void slowly being created by the exodus of our nonresident workers. Having worked with these students for the past year and a half and seeing the transformation that is coming over them, allow me to explain what has been and is happening at NMTI.

Because most of the students do not have any money, NMTI seeks donations and funding from many sources. To date it has managed to receive some funds to carry on. The Legislature has been generous during the past year by allotting a substantial amount of money. The NAP agency has also helped as has the Saipan Chamber of Commerce. One of NMTI's strongest proponents has been the Workforce Investment Agency by paying tuition for several of the students.

One of the newly added benefits is that the government has signed into law mandating that the Saipan Higher Education Funding Agency include students attending NMTI be eligible for funding as do students attending academic schools. Thus slowly the various agencies are pitching in, helping the students succeed.

The following courses are currently being offered: 1. Core Curriculum, a basic introductory course to the construction industry, 2. Electrical, 3. Carpentry, 4. Painting, 5. Plumbing, 6. Sewing, 7. Culinary Art, 8. Automobile Repair, and 9. Masonry. Soon to be started are hairstyling, air conditioning, how to start a business, personal finances and hospitality service. Many other courses will be added as the institute grows and the demand arises. Classes are held mainly in the evening; however, several are held in the daytime.

The NMTI teaches the three H's. The first H is the head in which we strive to develop a positive attitude toward work and ourselves. The second H is the heart. The student learns work ethics and moral responsibility. And the third H is the development of skill in the hands. By combining the three H's each student easily and quickly becomes a valuable asset to the community and to himself.

One of the most gratifying parts of the program is the placement of students in the workplace. The institute assists any student seeking employment to find a job. As a student progresses in his studies, he is employed more readily where he now has an opportunity to practice the theory he has learned at the institute. As the institute continues to grow more and more employers are accepting the students where before they would not. As a result many students who never worked before are now working, earning money and have gained pride.

The NMTI encourages you or anyone who wants to learn a skill to come visit it. The number is 235-6684. The first course you will enter is called the Core Curriculum. Here you will study aspects of the construction industry and decide what trade you wish to pursue. After three and half months of this course, you will enter your choice of trade. For example, should you choose to study carpentry, you will study both theory and actual hands-on techniques. For certification you must pass four levels which require about 40 months to complete. Upon completion you will become a certified carpenter by the National Center for Construction Education and Research. The NMTI is certified by the NCCER.

The NCCER is a national not-for-profit education foundation created to face the critical workforce facing the construction industry. It strives to standardize the various trades so that a graduate can work anywhere in the United States. Its mission is to build safe, productive and sustainable workforce of craft professionals.

NMTI is also closely affiliated with the Guam Contractors Association Trades School. In fact, we are also accredited by them. We use the same books and teaching techniques as they do. They are NMTI's mentor.

I could go on and on raving about the NMTI but I urge you who are looking to improve your job career, to learn a new trade, to become a business owner, and to improve your income, visit the in-

See BUILDING on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Stragglers under the Commonwealth umbrella

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

The Philippine Ambassador to the United States visited Saipan early part of the decade, and held a breakfast audience at the PIC. He asked: "How many Filipinos are there in the CNMI?" Being the new kid on the block, I quickly responded: "Twenty-four thousand." The Consul General immediately interjected with a smile: "We are claiming only about 20,000."

That was the first time I was confronted by the extent of Filipino out-of-status presence in the Commonwealth. Discovery of the gruesome and pitiful situation prevailing among the rest of the "alien" population, particularly the contract workers, followed. E.g., a Filipino contingent was recruited by their own relative to come as workers in the CNMI to non-existing jobs that, according to the recruiter, was promised him, but that the recruited claimed they were criminally conned into believing it existed, and had paid a hefty price for that belief and trust. Other nationals from other countries fell victim to the same scheme, rabid as the Nigerian offer of a frozen bank asset that still continues to victimize many.

Out to minister a religious congregation whose mission statement is quite specific about its support of the rights of the contract workers, I started appearing at the hearing office of the CNMI Labor Department. The first time came as a shock when I was barred from attending, not being a licensed lawyer, even though I was wearing the familiar accoutrement of my office. I knew my law enough to assert my right to assist anyone who sought my office's help, and be accorded that privilege, so the labor officer conceded to my presence. The worker's contracted rights were patently violated so the hearing officer took little time to render the appropriate judgment.

Establishing the Marianas Resource Center as the weekday presence of the congregation on island, and initiating a comprehensive village development project in Oleai/San Jose that took the economic, political and cultural of the village seriously and simultaneously, we began providing "sanctuary" to contract workers who had fallen into the twilight zone of CNMI's immigration and labor rules. That zone is a swath of a swamp, a quagmire and a quicksand.

Takers of proffered humanitarian assistance included a few Bangladeshis who were not followers of the Prophet and so were outside the protective call of the minaret. Soon, the Chinese showed up on the radar. Unlike Filipinos, they were severely handicapped by linguistic limitations in recognizing Austro-Polynesian cognates, understanding accretions of Iberian words to the local dialects, and getting used to the local population's usage of glocalized English.

A picture emerged of a docile population of foreigners exploited by their own kind, oblivious of any political rights, and reliant on fortune tellers and fast-buck schemes, subject to all kinds of machinations that promises improvement of luck in order to recoup initial investment of considerable size that, if not regained, would leave one in penury here and shame back home. Many wallow in this state. The stragglers and scramblers in our midst are legion.

If the vultures were mostly merciless mercenaries, the victims are incredibly gullible, and a sick system nurtures the situation sorely and solely because it treats contract workers as mere economic units of production and service, and hardly as human beings.

The highly publicized case in 2001 of the Shanghai nurses brought into the CNMI by an educational institution on a promise of a two-year nursing curriculum to hone their English language proficiency and prepare them to pass the NCLEX forced the creation of the "student visa" when three of their members exposed the institution's incompetence and opted to segue into NMC.

The Saipan University fiasco was a newer form of the "recruitment" scheme to get unwary but eager aliens draw lifetime savings along with loans from relatives and friends to come to these promising shores of a U.S. zip code.

"If you do well as a student for two years, you will qualify to attend a U.S. school of learning, and while in school, we will get you a job that will earn you a minimum of $3 per hour," students were allegedly told. Issuance of student permits would create its own monumental Lower Base heap that the Department of Commerce would take over the function from Immigration, which did not make the process more efficient but at least, slowed it down by making it more expensive.

Add to that the commercialization of marriage, job "sponsorship" for a fee, tourists allowed to overstay their official welcome, and flagrant but seemingly tolerated flesh and drug trade. Also, the informal economy spawned by a system that could not keep track of the people it allows into its sovereign territory, and one gets the picture of why the "umbrella" permit hurriedly foisted on the unaccounted population before the onset of federalization is wreaking as much havoc as it purports to bring sanity and order to a crazy situation.

The mercenaries are undaunted. I saw copies of identical pleadings for a waiver addressed to no less than Labor's celebrated volunteer asking that the waiver be granted to an overstaying tourist and a jobless consort so that they may be allowed time to seek other partners, apply for an Immediate Relative status, and qualify for the umbrella permit! Thirty dollars went for the translator's efforts per document submitted duly received and stamped. Document processing has suddenly become a growth industry.

The long line of those seeking cover under the umbrella permit at Labor might just compete with Macy's Thanksgiving parade in NYC in producing ticker tapes. Whoever developed this allure should get a raise for bringing undocumented and overstaying residents out of the woodwork into the statistical records.

Shanty dwellings with their ubiquitous satellite dishes house many aliens who expect the feds to start handing out urban legend visas come December. The CNMI "umbrella" offering has spawned its own myths. We are not surprised that money is being made, to the debit of the desperate. We think Merry Christmas is not going to be that merry for many this year! Nor will the umbrella be much to be thanked for come Thanksgiving Day. The bureaucratic rain drains the parade!

Letter to the Editor

Double-barreled assault!

At the onset, let me extend my sincerest apology to Dr. Thomas D. Arkle Jr. for giving credit for his eight-point suggestions on CUC to Mr. Ambrose Bennett, when in fact it was Dr. Arkle Jr. who suggested these very important tools of management. As I mentioned, "I sincerely hope that those in a position of power will make use of your input for it is the essence of efficient management." I believe in giving credit where credit is due and, again, my sincerest apology.

As to the issue of sovereignty, my statement "*under* the umbrella of the strongest nation in the world" is clear. Nowhere does it suggest sovereignty. So you must get your answers elsewhere. Thank you for lesson in history, though. While it portrays our evolution as a people in the hands of numerous "sovereign" nations, it, however fails to mention the oppression our people had to endure "under" the rule of these sovereign nations.

On Nov. 28, the federal judge will issue a ruling. Regardless of the outcome, future leaders will have a marker, thanks to this Administration, to navigate the affairs of the Commonwealth in the right direction in relations to the issue brought before the court.

Mr. Bennett, the last I communicated with the governor or any of his core group was about four years ago. I am not in cahoots with any of them to attack you in any way. My point is one of pragmatism. The monumental issue to me is of public record. The issue is the economy. I must choose a candidate who I believe can do a better job, not because I was denied a personal request, but because of their ability to perform. It is a matter of public record that Rep. Hofschneider repeatedly overspends his legislative budget, period. Can you imagine what will happen to the CNMI budget if he is in charge? It's pure and simple logic.

As I said to you, rational debate is welcome, tantrums are not.

Andy M. Ramos
Rota

Chalegua` De Chispas

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Guaha gi halom linahyan `nai hu huñgog siha fina` kuentus ni ti man-kombeni. Megai besis lokue `nai sumehayu ginen chinalegua de chispas sa` i kumekuentus sinparat ha fama i man-lache siha na infotmasion. Lamayot patte finu inosenteria `nai i prohimu chatkomprende kabales hafa i asuntu gi halum asuntu.

Pot ihemplu: Todus bumenefifisia setbisiun kandet yan hanum diariamente, siete dias gi semana. Este na setbisiu ti dibatdi. Dañkuly gastoña sa` ni unu gi entre hita siña rumibaha gastun laña ni mabebende ginen i mangai laña siha na nasion. Ni haye u gobietnu este na gastu siempre u parehu `sino ma-umenta mas deste otru sakan para mona.

Manlagnos i gobietnu emerensia na otdin para uma-aregla i uniku hospitatta guine. Hafa i problema? Deste ke mababa i CHC gi 1986 ha tutuhon gumai problema primera seguru pot taya` salape. Mas bahu kinalamteña gi hilu este na problema gi para u adelanta matulaikan makenaria siha, u koni propiu na empleau hospitat yan u prebeniye amot yan otru siha nesesidat man-malañgu.

Gi hilu este mampos i modun linala`ta ti homlu`. Pot ayu na megai man-ninaye daibetes yan chetnut korason. Megai lokue manninanaye todu klasen chetnut kanset. Tai bali para ta konie` halom espesialistan korason `an esta mayamag todu sensin korasonmu. Hita mismu, kada unu, siña umembrasa homlu na linala ya debi ta tutuhon gi neñgkanota siha. Dispues, mauleg lokue tana patte gi haanita regulat na eksisiu dimas de ta fan losus gi menan television.

Kuestion: Yangin ninaye hau kanset gofis pot sinparat hau chumupa, isau CHC este na chinatsaga? `An un` sufa i troñiku gi kanton chalan pot inipus ginimenmu maneska, isau i polisia este na chatdisisionmu? Yangin ume`esalau hau pot guaguan utilidat, ke lau kau guaha lañamu gi tatten guma para usun CUC kosake u tunug i gaston este na attikulu? Todu este siha na chalegua` chispas hagu solu kapitan gi batkomu ya hagu ha` lokue siña umoppe sin un` fañogne otru.

■■■

I asuntun Indihinau (natibun este siha na islas) siempre u tutuhon tumeug gi anaku na karera mona. Aksepta na siempre este u fatoigue hit deste otru sakan. U guaha fina` hunta pot otru posision pot Attikulu Dose gi konstitusion. Siempre un` mapoñga dumifendi `sino munaen ñaihon direchun

natibu, i tautauta Chamorro yan Karolinas.

Lau gi katkuet dinaña pot direchun natibu, mauleg tana` fan pasifiku hinasota ya ta ina kabales hafa i man-mansañgan siha yan kau umafagcha` yan i intension Attikulu Dose. Enfin, guaha dos attikulu gi papa este na probision ni mauleg ta hasu gi hilu antau na eskalera. Guiya este i dos: 1). I ti manmasede na tautauta mangai tanu guine pot manaigue antes de 1951 na sakan. I otru pot haga famaguon natibu. Unu, ti manhanau este siha na tautauta ya ma-abandona tanu niha. Pot chochu yan adelantun edukasion na man-hanau ginen tano`ta. Pagu pot bandan haga`, ni ñgaian `nai baihu kontentu na este na probision para u chapag i tautau ginen kutturaña. Nae` todu i dos sa` ni taimanu biramu, tautauta ha` este siha na los probes. Na fan maagim korason miyu gi este i dos attikulu. Sen mas, si Yuus Maase`!

BUILDING

From Page 10

stitute and find out how it can help you. Also refer your friends or children to enroll.

Believe or not, federalization is here and has already started to make marked changes in the local work market. In the near future it will be almost impossible to find skilled workers to do the construction needed in our islands. It will be difficult to find any skilled workers to repair or maintain our houses. For example, several weeks ago I was looking for a licensed electrician. I was surprised to find that there only two on Saipan.

Try to hire a local carpenter, a painter, a plumber or a mason. They simply do not exist. Tell me who build our houses and other buildings and who did all the electrical, plumbing, painting and other required work to build them before the introduction of nonresident workers? We did it ourselves! We were trained to do all that type of work but something happened along the way.

When we have built a force of trained workers, we will create a middle class of people earning decent salaries. We will no longer be strangled by the minimum wage cord. We will receive what we deserve based on our ability to perform the job required professionally.

I often tell people who ask me about the institute to not ask me, but to ask the students who are currently enrolled. From their comments we can learn more than I could ever tell you. The students are the real test of the quality of training and pride that is being instilled in them.

Those of us who have retired, what are we doing with our retirement? Those of us who are not happy in our present workplace, why do we continue being trapped there? What will we do as the many opportunities open up for needed skilled trades people both here and in Guam? Will we miss the opportunities? Think about it.

As always the future is in our hands. Don't fumble it. The CNMI needs trained skilled trades people. The NMTI is opening the door to a new era. Call 235-6684. It is the gateway to better wages and a new future. Don't be left behind.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

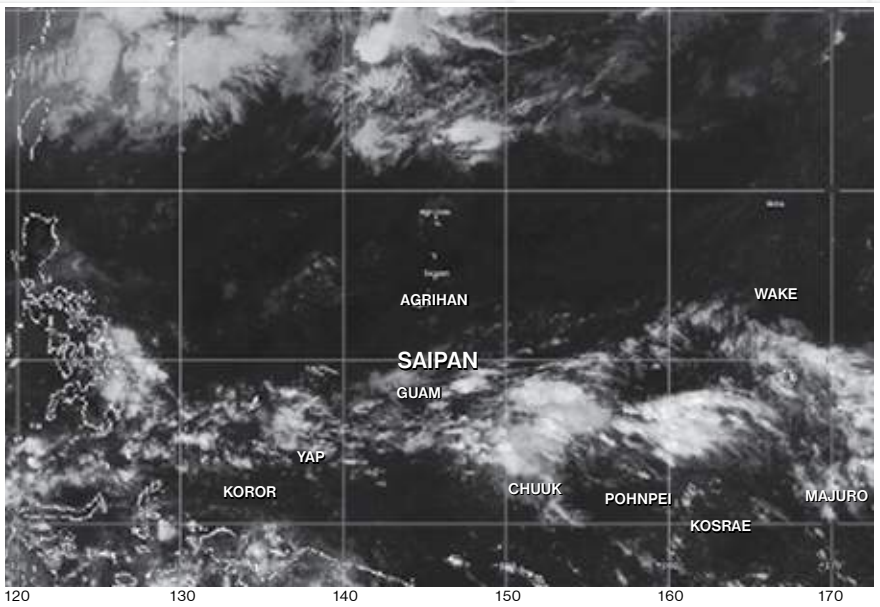
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲88	▼79
Palau	Thunder Storms	▲84	▼79
Yap	Showers	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼76
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼77
Kosrae	Rain	▲88	▼78
Majuro	Showers	▲88	▼79

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲62	▼54
Beijing	Cloudy	▲32	▼19
Hong Kong	Showers	▲70	▼61
Honolulu	Showers	▲79	▼73
London	Cloudy	▲57	▼50
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲79	▼52
Manila	Partly Sunny	▲86	▼75
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲78	▼58
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲83	▼71
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲59	▼40
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲55	▼43
Paris	Showers	▲56	▼48
Pusan	Cloudy	▲45	▼35
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲70	▼51
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲58	▼39
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲64	▼46
Seoul	Cloudy	▲39	▼28
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲57	▼45
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲63	▼43

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N143E past 130E at 21N. Scattered showers are along and up to 125 miles northwest of the front. A surface trough extends from 18N132E southeastward to end near Palau at 7N136E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are north of Palau within 150 miles of a line from 12N133E to 9N134E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms near Yap within 75 miles of a line form 11N138E to 11N144E and near Chuuk within 80 miles of a line from 9N152E to 7N154E and from north of Kosrae eastward across Majuro within 100 miles of a line from 9N164E to 7N173E. A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from 2N130E to 2N141E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are south of a line from N130E to EQ135E. A surface trough near Tarawa and Butaritari Atolls extends from 3N173E to EQ172E with scattered showers and a few thunderstorms within 75 miles of the trough.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
1:05 AM Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
7:58 AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
1:18 PM Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
6:19 PM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:19 AM	5:44 PM
Tuesday	6:20 AM	5:44 PM
Wednesday	6:20 AM	5:44 PM
Thursday	6:21 AM	5:44 PM
Friday	6:21 AM	5:44 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	5:31 AM	5:06 PM
Tuesday	6:27 AM	5:56 PM
Wednesday	7:23 AM	6:47 PM
Thursday	8:17 AM	7:40 PM
Friday	9:08 AM	8:33 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 4, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:45am	5:35am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ604/703	2:50am	11:25am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C09603/933	3:15pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:30am	4:05am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:20am	2:50am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09598	2:20am	4:05am	5, 6 via ROP
C09316	2:20am	3:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW298	10:05pm	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	4, 7
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA-SAIPAN

OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1 via ICN	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1 via GUM	1, 3, 5, 6, 7
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	2,4,6,7 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1 via ICN	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Kazakhstan TV station featuring NMI in November

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Navy, Air Force set exercises on FDM

The U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force will conduct live-fire and laser training exercises on the island of Farallon de Medinilla Nov. 16 to 21, from 7am to 1am.

The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon de Medinilla Training Area on a 10-nautical mile radius on all quadrants. The public—especially fisherman, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from this area during the times and dates indicated. ***(PR)***

KHS PTSA meeting, report card distribution tomorrow

Attention to parents and guardians of Kagman High School students: There will be a PTSA meeting tomorrow, Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2009, from 6pm to 7pm, at the School's cafeteria.

The first quarter report card for school year 2009-2010 is set for Thursday, Nov. 19, from 3:30pm to 6pm. Report cards will be distributed at all classes. Students, please advise your parents/guardians on all your classroom number, with teacher's name. Class schedule will be half-dayonly. Students will be released at noon. ***(PR)***

Thanks For Giving Walk set for Saturday

The Thanks For Giving walk will begin at 7am on Sat, Nov. 21, 2009, at the Garapan Fishing Base and is coordinated by Team Courage, cancer survivors in the CNMI.

Garapan Elementary and Bank of Guam tandem will participate in both the walk and MMAC 2010. Families, friends and cancer survivors are encouraged to participate in the Thanks For Giving Walk.

For more information about the annual Marianas March Against Cancer event, please contact Janine Nogis at 483-4207 or send an email to MMAC2010@google-groups.com. ***(PR)***

Saipan to observe 'Feed Saipan Thursday'

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela will sign a mayoral proclamation on Nov. 19, 2009, at 11am to designate Thursday, Nov. 26, 2009, Thanksgiving Day as "Feed Saipan Thursday."

Traditionally for six years, "Feed Saipan Thursday" reminds everyone to fast for one full meal on Thanksgiving Day to remember those who continue to starve because they have less or no food on their eating table. Saipan will also remember those who remain homeless and in dire need of clothing and shelter.

The Office of the Mayor of Saipan is now receiving food, clothing and monetary donations to be turned over to Karidat Social Services. Anyone who would like to donate food, clothing and money, may the call the Saipan Mayor's Office at 234-6280 or 6208 and ask for Ton Benavente. You can bring your donations to the Saipan Mayor's Office during business hours, Monday to Friday. ***(PR)***

Farmers meeting to elect SNISWCD administrators

The Department of Lands and Natural Resources and the Saipan and Northern Islands Soil and Water Conservation District will conduct a meeting to elect District Board Administrators on Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2009, at the Garapan Fishing Base in Garapan. In accordance with Public Law 4-44 that established the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the CNMI, the election term is for Fiscal Year 2009-2012.

The event will be conducted by Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Dr. Ignacio T. Dela Cruz and will be from 6pm to 7pm at the Garapan Fishing Base in Garapan. We encourage all farmers and rancher to please attend this important meeting.

Farmers and ranchers who would like to know more about this meeting can contact the local Saipan and Northern Islands SWCD office at 234-6180 and ask for Diana Gabaldo. ***(PR)***

MVA

Kazakhstan travel agents and media reps enjoy the sunshine of the Northern Marianas island of Tinian on Oct. 28, 2009. They were hosted by the Marianas Visitors Authority. MVA Marketing Representative Tatiana Babauta, center in white, accompanied the group as they visited the islands.

Citizens of Kazakhstan in central Asia near Russia will soon be much more aware of the Northern Mariana Islands and its many attractions for tourists, thanks to a recent visit by ten Kazakhstan travel agents and two photographers from the Yel-Arna TV channel. The Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) hosted the visitors for several days in late October; Pacific Islands Club and Aqua Resort Club also helped to organize this familiarization trip.

The Northern Marianas is expected to receive 15 minutes of prime time television coverage each week of November (four times) on the Yel-Arna TV channel, owned by the Khabar Agency. The NMI tourist updates will reach an audience of 13 million potential travelers.

"Due to our wonderful warm weather, we are a natural destination for visitors from this area," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "We look forward to more Kazakhstan tourists arriving in the coming months."

While in the Northern Marianas, these 10 top travel agents plus the TV crew toured Saipan and enjoyed a sunset dinner cruise and saw many other attractions. They came here to familiarize themselves firsthand with the attractions the Northern Marianas have to offer. They visited several of Saipan's hotels, including Pacific Islands Club, Fiesta Resort & Spa, World Resort, Mariana Resort & Spa, Hyatt Regency Saipan, and Aqua Resort Club. They also sampled the food offered at these hotels' restaurants. A day of marine sports on the beautiful beaches and in the clear waters of Managaha Island was included in their activities.

On Tinian the group snorkeled with turtles, toured the island's historical sites, and visited Tinian Dynasty. An untimely tropical storm precluded their planned trip to Rota.

The estimated exposure value for the Northern Marianas Islands of the television coverage is over USD $67,000. ***(MVA)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY SHOUT

A very happy birthday greeting going out to a dear father, Leo P. Kani, who is celebrating his birthday today, Nov. 16! We love you! From your rascals and grand rascals!

BEFORE THE COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

REVIEW OF COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION'S WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES

DOCKET 09-2

AMENDED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT at 1:00 p.m. on November 16, 2009, the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission [Commission] will conduct a public hearing and regulatory workshop at the Senate Chamber in the Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building on Capitol Hill to receive evidence, argument, discussion and public comment on the following regulatory matters concerning the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation [CUC] and on such other regulatory matters as may arise. For the convenience of the public, a second public hearing will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday November 18, 2009 at the Chamber of Commerce conference room, which is located on the first floor of the Family Building, Garapan Street, Garapan.

1. **FY10 CUC water and wastewater rate increases.**

The Commission will examine whether it would be prudent and necessary to increase CUC's water and wastewater rates effective December 1, 2009. This examination will occur within the context of the following recent events: a] By order dated June 20, 2009, the Commission directed CUC to increase its wastewater rates by 173.4% in two equal phases - effective July 1, 2009 and September 4, 2009. CUC supported this rate increase and cautioned the Commission that failure to implement the increase would materially impair its ability to comply with its duties under the Federal Stipulated Order [Federal Order] dated March 11, 2009, in USA v. CUC and CNMI. Nevertheless, CUC failed to implement the wastewater rate increase. b] The Federal Order, as modified by EPA, directed CUC on or before October 1, 2008 to prepare and submit for Federal approval an interim financial plan, which would, in part, establish its need for rate relief during each of the next three years in order to comply with federal requirements for the restoration of its water and wastewater systems. On or about September 26, 2009, CUC filed an interim financial plan for federal review and approval. Federal authorities have determined that the plan does not satisfy the Federal Order's requirements, which are material to the Commission's determination of CUC's need for additional rate relief in the current fiscal year [FY10]. c] CUC has failed to provide the Commission with material financial information, which is necessary for the Commission's regulatory consultant [Georgetown] to accurately quantify CUC's need for additional water and wastewater rate relief in FY10. d] By initial report dated October 21, 2009, Georgetown advises that based upon available information, additional water rate relief of 51% and additional wastewater rate relief of 184% in FY10 would be necessary to enable CUC to meet the requirements of the Federal Order. Georgetown cautions, however, that these estimates are subject to revision, if and when, CUC provides essential delinquent financial information and further when a federally approved interim financial plan has been crafted and adopted. A follow-up Georgetown report will be filed with the Commission on November 4, 2009. e] By rate order dated September 3, 2009, the Commission found that substantial inefficiencies in CUC's billing and collection system and in its service rules cause unreasonable expenses and lost revenues, which if corrected would reduce the need for increases to CUC's water and wastewater rates. CUC was directed to immediately commence an assessment of these inefficiencies. The Commission awaits a status report from CUC on the status of this assessment.

2. **Water and wastewater lifeline rates.**

Georgetown recommends in its October 22, 2009 summary report that in the event the Commission decides to implement additional FY10 water and wastewater rate increases effective December 1, 2009, interim lifeline rates should also be established effective December 1, 2009 for CUC's low income water and wastewater customers. The details of these lifeline rates will be contained in Georgetown's November 4, 2009 supplemental filing.

3. **Synchronization of Commission's regulatory activities with Federal Order.**

By order dated September 2, 2009, the Commission directed Georgetown to review CUC's interim financial plan, as required by the Federal Order and: 1. recommend a process by which the Commission should examine CUC's need for rate relief during the three year term of the interim plan; 2. identify material deficiencies in the interim plan; and 3. recommend essential components in CUC's financial management plan, as required by the Federal Order, which will be necessary to enable CUC to comply with the Federal Order. Federal authorities have requested the Commission's input on these matters toward the objective of synchronizing Commission and federal regulatory activities related to the Federal Order. At the hearing, the Commission will review Georgetown's report on this matter, which will be filed on November 4, 2009.

COPIES OF THE March 11, 2009 Federal Order, CUC's September 26, 2009 interim financial plan and Georgetown's October 22, 2009 summary letter are incorporated herein by reference and are available for public inspection at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's website [www.saipanchamber.com] under its Public Utilities tab. Georgetown's subsequent November 4, 2009 reports, as discussed herein, will also be posted on the Chamber website for public inspection and will also be available for public inspection at the Chamber's office.

THE COMMISSION WELCOMES THE PUBLIC'S ATTENDANCE at the November 16 and 18, 2009 public hearings and will welcome public comments at the conclusion of the hearings. Persons who desire to formally participate in the hearing pursuant to 4 CMC § 8409(j) should on or before November 9, 2009 file with the Commission at the Chamber's office an application and offer of proof in accordance with §8409(j) and Commission Procedural Rule 11(c). Subsequent to the public hearings, the Commission will conduct a special business meeting at 5:00 p.m. on November 20, 2009 at the Chamber's office to consider and make decisions regarding matters considered a the public hearing. Further information about the public hearing and the public's right to participate may be obtained from Commissioner Kyle Calabrese at 670-233-7150.

TOKIO MARINE & NICHIDO FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY, LTD.
NOTICE OF INTENTION TO WITHDRAW

Following a strategic review of our business in the region, notice is being given that Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance Co., Ltd. intends to withdraw from the insurance business in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands ("CNMI"). An Application for an Order permitting withdrawal from the insurance business in the CNMI will be filed with the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, Department of Commerce, CNMI.

All persons interested in this matter should contact: Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc. as General Agent for Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance Co., Ltd.

Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance Co., Ltd.
PO Box 500168,
SAIPAN, MP 96950

Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc.
Telephone: 234-6267

All the remaining liabilities as of January 1, 2010 will be transferred to Tokio Marine Pacific Insurance Limited.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB10-RDLNR-014

SUBMISSION: DECEMBER 15, 2009 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) UTILITY TRACTOR AND ACCESSORIES - CIF ROTA FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES, ROTA BRANCH"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB IS DUE ON **DECEMBER 4, 2009, CLOSE OF BUSINESS** AND SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO MR. JAMES C. MANGLONA, ACTING RESIDENT DIRECTOR AT TEL (670) 532-9494/5 OR BY FAX TO (670) 532-0520 OR E-MAIL TO dlnr@pticom.com.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ **JOSEPH S. INOS**
MAYOR OF ROTA

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

/s/ **JAMES C. MANGLONA**
ACTING RESIDENT DIRECTOR
DLNR, ROTA

LOOKING FOR L&T FORMER EMPLOYEES

All those people who had purchased shirts during Luen Thai factory closure and still retain an original receipt will be rewarded $1,000.00 to that individual.

Contact: Mr. Sun @ (670) 287-9008

Business

Medicare paid $47 billion in suspect claims

WASHINGTON (AP)—The government paid more than $47 billion in questionable Medicare claims including medical treatment showing little relation to a patient's condition, wasting taxpayer dollars at a rate nearly three times the previous year.

Excerpts of a new federal report, obtained by The Associated Press, show a dramatic increase in improper payments in the $440 billion Medicare program that has been cited by government auditors as a high risk for fraud and waste for 20 years.

It's not clear whether Medicare fraud is actually worsening. Much of the increase in the last year is attributed to a change in the Health and Human Services Department's methodology that imposes stricter documentation requirements and includes more improper payments—part of a data-collection effort being ordered government-wide by President Barack Obama this coming week to promote "honest budgeting" and accurate statistics.

Still, the fiscal 2009 financial report—covering the first few months of the Obama administration—highlights the challenges ahead for a government that is seeking in part to pay for its proposed health care overhaul by cracking down on Medicare fraud. While noting that several new anti-fraud efforts were beginning, the government report makes clear that "aggressive actions" to date aimed at reducing improper payments had yielded little improvement.

In recent years, the suspect claims have included Medicare prescriptions from doctors who were dead, and requests for payment for medical supplies such as blood glucose strips for sexual impotence and diabetic shoes for leg amputees. Patients, many of them new citizens who barely speak English, are sometimes recruited by brokers who go door-to-door offering hundreds of dollars for use of their Medicare numbers.

Obama is expected to announce new initiatives this coning week to help crack down on Medicare fraud, including a government-wide Web site aimed at providing a fuller account of health care spending and improper payments made by various agencies. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services also will launch a Web interactive next month that will allow users to track Medicare payment information by categories such as state, diagnosis and hospital.

According to the report, the Bush administration from 2005-2008 reported improper payments of roughly 4 percent in the fee for service program, or about $17 billion total in 2008. Government officials at the time, however, typically did not consider a Medicare payment improper if the medical documentation was incomplete or a doctor's signature was illegible. Since these were flaws that ordinarily bar payment, that methodology drew complaints from government auditors that the figures were understated.

Obama boosts hopes for free trade in Asia-Pacific

SINGAPORE (AP)—President Barack Obama raised hopes for creating an Asia-Pacific free-trade region by announcing Saturday that the U.S. would seek to join a smaller group seen as a precursor to a broader Pacific Rim agreement.

News that the U.S. would participate in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, joining Chile, New Zealand, Singapore and Brunei, was announced in Tokyo and Singapore, drawing applause at the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

"Significant steps like the TPP are important to help keep up the momentum in our efforts to realize the ... vision" to create a region-wide free trade area, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong told other leaders at their weekend summit here.

There have been concerns that the U.S., the world's biggest economy, and other nations might turn inward as they grapple with the worst global financial crisis in decades.

AP

US President Barack Obama, right, is served tea during his bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore at Istana in Singapore, Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009.

Obama's move reinforced calls for expanding free trade rather than resorting to protectionist measures to cope with the recession. He pushed for progress on talks to liberalize world trade.

"In this new era, opening other markets around the globe will be critical not just to America's prosperity, but to the world's," Obama said in Tokyo before departing for the APEC forum.

APEC, celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, was created to promote greater trade and integration among Pacific Rim nations from Chile to China. Its scope since has expanded to encompass a wide range of issues, including climate change, energy and food security, and politics.

The anniversary comes amid the biggest global financial crisis since the 1930s. While the worst appears over, the recovery remains fragile, leaders said.

Can the stock market rally last?

NEW YORK (AP)—Somebody on a bus asks a friend, "How about that stock market?" The response: "Unbelievable." Caribbean vacationers lounging poolside check their Blackberries for stock prices. Suburban gym members chat about the latest market gains during their morning workouts.

Welcome to the 2009 bull market—or so many people think. They're buying up shares of everything from Google Inc. to Bank of America Corp. at a pace not seen since the 1930s. Since March, the Dow Jones industrial average has jumped 57 percent and the Standard & Poor's 500 index has gained 62 percent.

Investors are betting on a strong economic recovery. But here's the problem: Good news ahead could be bad news for the bull.

To understand why, consider the very thing that has boosted the market. The U.S. government has spent nearly $1 trillion to stimulate the economy and the Federal Reserve has maintained a policy of keeping interest rates near zero.

Those will disappear as the economy's health improves, potentially halting the bull market by taking away what has been its crutch—sources of cheap and plentiful money.

"Pretty soon the easy money phase could be behind us," said Hugh Johnson, chairman and chief investment officer of Johnson Illington Advisors, an investment firm in Albany, N.Y.

AP

James Maguire Jr., left, and Rudy Mass work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Thursday, Nov. 12, 2009.

The government has plunged big money into the marketplace, through tax cuts, construction projects and other measures. At the same time, low interest rates have invigorated stocks by reducing borrowing costs and bolstering corporate profits.

The low rates have also knocked down the returns of other short-term investments, like government bonds and money-market funds. Since people aren't getting high returns on those investments, they're buying stocks.

Stocks are risky because they don't guarantee a return, and the recent bear market shows how deeply share prices can drop. From October 2007 through March, the Dow industrials lost 53 percent.

"The Fed is forcing everyone to take risk by buying stocks because if you don't take risk, you will be earning nothing on your money," said Ed Yardeni, president and chief investment strategist at Yardeni Research.

Yardeni said his clients, which include pension funds and institutional investors, feel like they don't have a choice but to buy stocks right now. He sees lots of "fully invested bears"—investors who don't believe that investing in stocks makes sense right now because of the state of the economy, but they are buying anyway because they worry they might miss out on a bull run.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Google makes concessions on digital book deal

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Internet search leader Google will ease its control over millions of copyright-protected books earmarked for its digital library if a court approves a revised lawsuit settlement that addresses objections of antitrust regulators. The offer comes two months after the U.S. Justice Department balked at Google's original agreement with authors and publishers, warning the arrangement could do more harm than good in the emerging market for electronic books. Google Inc. is hoping to keep the deal alive with a series of new provisions.

Fund OKd for claims against Va. peanut company

LYNCHBURG, Va. (AP)—A $12 million fund is being created for claims against Peanut Corp. of America, the processor at the center of a nationwide salmonella outbreak this year. U.S. Bankruptcy Judge William E. Anderson agreed Thursday to approve the fund, which is intended to settle claims by people sickened by peanuts traced to the company's Blakely, Ga., plant. Bankruptcy trustee Roy Creasy said there are 114 claims, a number likely to rise as more claims are made. The outbreak sickened about 700 people and has been linked to at least nine deaths.

Dutch drivers to pay tax on road time, not on car

AMSTERDAM (AP)—The Dutch government plans to bring the polluter-pays principle into the home garage. Rather than an annual road tax for their cars, drivers will soon pay a few cents for every kilometer (mile) on the road, in a plan aimed at breaking chronic traffic jams and cutting carbon emissions, the Cabinet decided Friday. When the plan takes effect in 2012, new car prices will drop as much as 25 percent with the abolition of a purchase tax and the road tax, which now totals more than euro600 ($900) per year for a mid-sized car.

Neb. meatpacker sued over handling of layoffs

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—Three women who once worked at a Nebraska meatpacking company have sued their former employer, saying it violated a federal law aimed at protecting workers during mass layoffs or plant closings. Premium Protein Products is accused of violating the federal Worker Adjustment Retraining and Notification Act, better known as the W.A.R.N. Act, in a class-action lawsuit filed in U.S. Bankruptcy Court on Thursday. The law requires companies in certain instances to give workers 60 days notice of a closing or mass layoff. An estimated 400 Premium Protein Products workers have been off the job since June.

Survey shows spike in 1st-time homebuyers

SAN DIEGO (AP)—The housing market welcomed a bigger share of first-time buyers and single women this past year, while a majority of sellers resorted to dialing down prices to get their homes sold, a new homebuyer survey shows. First-time buyers accounted for a record 47 percent of home sales between July 2008 and June this year, up from 41 percent in the prior-year period, according to the survey conducted by the National Association of Realtors. The annual survey gleans details on everything from how buyers came up with down payments to how long it took sellers to unload their homes.

Nation

GOP lawmakers leap on study of rising health care costs

WASHINGTON (AP)—Overall spending on health care would rise as a result of legislation approved a week ago by the House, and billions of dollars in projected savings contained in the measure will be difficult to maintain, according to a report by a top official at the agency that oversees Medicare.

The legislation would expand insurance coverage to an estimated 32 million people who now lack it, according to the report, creating a demand for services that "could be difficult to meet initially ... and could lead to price-increases, cost-shifting and/or changes in providers' willingness to treat patients with low-reimbursement health coverage."

The analysis was issued by Richard Foster, the chief actuary at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, which is part of the Health and Human Services Department. The study was conducted at the request of House Republicans, who quickly tried to turn it against the Obama administration.

Rep. John Boehner of Ohio, the House GOP leader, issued a statement saying the study "confirms that this bill violates President Obama's promise to 'bend the cost curve.' It's now beyond dispute that their bill will raise costs."

But Brendan Daly, a spokesman for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said the report "shows that our health reform bill will extend the life of the Medicare trust fund by five years, significantly longer than any proposal in recent years."

The same report "estimates that our bill will cover 10 percent more of the population with less than a 1.3 percent increase in national health expenditures that illustrates a bending of the cost curve," he added.

Obama and congressional Democrats have said one of their goals with the legislation is to slow the growth of health care costs nationally.

With one exception, Republicans voted against the legislation when it cleared the House, and the GOP now is girding for a fight in the Senate, where debate on health care is expected to begin within days.

In the party's weekly radio and Internet address, Rep. Mark Kirk of Illinois accused House Democrats of missing opportunities to improve the legislation when they rejected Republican proposals to limit lawsuits and give states more flexibility to enact innovative changes.

Ma of missing 5-year-old NC girl is charged

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. (AP)—The mother of a 5-year-old girl who disappeared in central North Carolina was charged Saturday with human trafficking and other offenses, though authorities said they still did not know the girl's whereabouts.

Davis

Antoinette Nicole Davis, the mother of Shaniya Davis, faces a child abuse charge involving prostitution as well as filing a false police report, according to a news release from the Fayetteville Police Department. The release did not say whether the charges were related to her daughter's disappearance. Telephone messages left for police were not immediately returned.

An official at the Cumberland County Detention Center said Davis was still being booked and it was unclear whether she had an attorney. Her first court appearance would likely be Monday.

Authorities have said Mario Andrette McNeill admitted to kidnapping the girl, though his attorney says he will plead not guilty to the charge. Surveillance footage showed McNeill carrying Shaniya into a hotel room Tuesday morning, when she was reported missing from a mobile home park.

Shaniya's father, Bradley Lockhart, told The Associated Press he raised his daughter for several years but last month decided to let her stay with her mother. He said Davis struggled financially over the years, but she recently obtained a job and her own place, so Lockhart decided to give her a chance to raise their daughter.

"I should've never let her go over there," he said Saturday night.

Lockhart said police have not told him whether they are any closer to finding his daughter.

"I just want her to come back safe my friend," he said. "I love her very much and I hope she is OK."

He described his relationship with Davis as a "one-night stand" and said he and Davis never argued about him raising Shaniya.

"Shaniya is a precious young lady and she is special," Lockhart said.

AP-GfK poll: US turning pessimistic

By LIZ SIDOTI
AP NATIONAL POLITICAL WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Elected last November on a wave of optimism, President Barack Obama now finds himself governing an increasingly pessimistic country in recession while muscling through Congress a health care reform overhaul and weighing whether to commit more U.S. troops to the 8-year-old Afghanistan war.

The latest Associated Press-GfK poll shows that Americans grew slightly more dispirited on a range of matters over the past month, continuing slippage that has occurred since Obama took office as the year began.

They were more pessimistic about the direction of the country. They disapproved of Obama's handling of the economy a bit more than before. And, perhaps most striking for this novice commander in chief, more people have lost confidence in Obama on Iraq and Afghanistan over the last month.

"It's in pretty bad shape," said truck driver Floyd Hacker from the Midwestern state of Missouri, He is a Democrat who voted for Obama. "He sounded like somebody who could make things happen. I still think he can."

Still, Hacker said, he questions the president's approach to the economy, what the United States is trying to accomplish in Afghanistan, and Obama's focus on health care, adding: "He can't handle everything at one time."

Public attitudes like that are troubling for a president who is trying to accomplish an ambitious agenda at home while fighting wars abroad, as well as for a Democratic Party heading into a critical election year. It will look to stave off losses a new president typically experiences in his first midterm elections. A third of the Senate, all of the House and most governors' offices will be on the ballot.

The findings underscore just how quickly the political environment can change, a lesson in cautiousness for out-of-power Republicans salivating at the murky state of the electorate and buzzing with energy after booting Democrats from rule in Virginia and New Jersey governors' races last week.

It was just over a year ago that Obama won the White House in an electoral landslide and Democrats padded their congressional majorities. The country was riding high with optimism by just about all measures when Obama took office in January.

"Hope" and "change" were en vogue back then. But "change" didn't happen overnight, as the rhetoric of campaigning crashed headlong into the realities of governing. And "hope" slipped in a country that always has clung to it.

Now, Obama's approval rating stands at 54 percent, roughly the same as in October but very different from what it was in January just before he took office, 74 percent. And some 56 percent of people say the country is heading in the wrong direction, an uptick from 51 percent last month and 49 percent in Obama's first month as president.

Mourners grieve for soldiers killed in Fort Hood shooting

AP

Members of the Patriot Guard listen as Taps are played during the funeral for Pfc. Michael Pearson at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, Ill., on Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009. Pearson was one of 13 killed during the Fort Hood shootings.

KIEL, Wis. (AP)—Hundreds of people lining the main street of an Indiana town on Saturday fell solemnly silent as the white hearse passed. Mourners waited for hours outside a Wisconsin gymnasium to say goodbye to a soldier who once promised to take down Osama bin Laden.

And in Oklahoma, a newlywed grieved for her husband of nearly three months.

Several victims of the Nov. 5 shooting massacre at Fort Hood, Texas, were laid to rest Saturday across the country, after family members, friends, fellow soldiers and strangers passed their flag-draped coffins and paid their respects.

In Plymouth, Ind., Sheila Ellabarger had placed two foot-high American flags in the grass where she watched the procession for U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Justin DeCrow. She said her children went to school with DeCrow and his wife—his high school sweetheart—and she knew others in his family.

"He was killed by a terrorist in my mind but he was still killed in the line of duty. We owe him a debt of gratitude, him and his family and the other soldiers. We owe them our lives, our freedom," Ellabarger said.

During services in Norman, Okla., images of Army Spc. Jason Dean Hunt and his beaming wife were shown on a screen. The recently married 22-year-old was described as a loving husband and family man as well as a soldier who left a legacy of selflessness and service.

"We may never find out the reason for what occurred on that fateful day at Fort Hood, Texas," said Brig. Gen. Ross Ridge, of Fort Sill, Okla. "The military community are all grieving here today over the loss of this dedicated soldier."

ACROSS THE NATION

Man is zapped with stun gun at mom's NY home, dies

CORAM, N.Y. (AP)—Police say a man who had locked himself and his mother in her Long Island home died after he tussled with officers and was zapped with a stun gun. Police say they're investigating the early Saturday death of 43-year-old Darryl Bain in Coram, about 50 miles east of New York City. They say Bain's brother called 911 alleging Bain was high on cocaine and had shut himself in the house with their 78-year-old mother. Police say three officers heard a struggle inside and entered the house and fought with Bain, who was temporarily stunned after being shot with a Taser. Police say Bain continued to struggle as they handcuffed him and he stopped breathing moments later.

1 killed as plane crashes in suburb east of LA

SAN GABRIEL, Calif. (AP)—One person was killed when a small plane crashed in the heavily populated suburb of San Gabriel northeast of Los Angeles. Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Ian Gregor says the single-engine Beechcraft Bonanza crashed and caught fire shortly after 4 p.m. Saturday, killing the only person on board. The plane departed from Brackett Field in La Verne about 25 miles east of the crash site and was on a short flight to Van Nuys. There are no reports of injuries to anyone on the ground and no immediate word of what caused the crash.

Ellis Island museum evacuated after powder found

NEW YORK (AP)—A white powder that was found at Ellis Island and caused a brief evacuation at the immigration landmark in New York Harbor has been deemed harmless. Jersey City, N.J., fire official Armando Roman says a hazardous-materials team responded to a call about the powder at the island's immigration museum on Saturday afternoon. The museum was evacuated for about 90 minutes, but visitors didn't have to leave the island. Spokespeople for the National Park Service haven't returned phone calls seeking comment.

Official: Illinois prison eyed for Gitmo inmates

CHICAGO (AP)—The Obama administration may buy a near-empty prison in rural northwestern Illinois to house detainees from Guantanamo Bay along with federal inmates, a White House official said Saturday. The maximum-security Thomson Correctional Facility, about 150 miles west of Chicago, was one of several evaluated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and emerged as a leading option to house the detainees, the official told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because a decision has not been made. President Barack Obama wants alleged terrorism suspects from the controversial military-run detention center in Cuba to be transferred to U.S. soil so they can be prosecuted for their suspected crimes.

Asia

Obama talks climate, arms control

SINGAPORE(AP)—President Barack Obama and other world leaders agreed Sunday that next month's much-anticipated climate change summit will be merely a way station, not the once hoped-for end point, in the search for a worldwide global warming treaty.

The 192-nation climate conference beginning in three weeks in Copenhagen had originally been intended to produce a new global climate-change treaty. Hopes for that have dimmed lately. But comments by Obama and fellow leaders at a hastily arranged breakfast meeting here on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific summit served to put the final nail in any remaining expectations for the December summit.

"There was an assessment by the leaders that it is unrealistic to expect a full internationally, legally binding agreement could be negotiated between now and Copenhagen which starts in 22 days," said Michael Froman, Obama's deputy national security adviser for international economic matters.

The prime minister of Denmark, Lars Loekke Rasmussen, the U.N.-sponsored climate conference's chairman, flew overnight to Singapore to present a proposal to the leaders to instead make the Copenhagen goal a matter of crafting a "politically binding" agreement, in hopes of rescuing some future for the struggling process.

A fully binding legal agreement would be left to a second meeting next year in Mexico City, Froman said.

Fire at SKorean shooting range kills 10

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A fire tore though an indoor shooting range in southern South Korea, killing 10 people, including at least two Japanese tourists, and injuring six.

Some people were on fire as they ran out of the building Saturday, Yonhap news agency quoted a witness as saying.

An official at the National Emergency Management Agency said authorities were struggling to identify the dead because of their burns. A police official said at least two Japanese were confirmed killed and three other Japanese were presumed to have perished.

Nine Japanese tourists and their South Korean guide were inside the facility in the southeastern port city of Busan when the fire broke out on the second floor of a five-story building, police official Han Jong-seok said. He said it was not known how many other people were in the building at the time.

Yoo Seung-ho, a detective handling the case, said four other Japanese were being treated in hospitals.

He said police plan to conduct DNA analysis in coming days to identify the bodies burned beyond recognition.

A Japanese man was in life-threatening condition with severe burns at Dong-a University Medical Center in Busan, said Kim Won-ha, an emergency room nurse.

Suicide attack kills 11 in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—A suicide car bomber attacked a police checkpoint in northwest Pakistan on Saturday, killing 11 people, including four children, the latest in a wave of militant attacks that have claimed more than 300 lives in the past month.

The attack on the outskirts of Peshawar solidifies the city's ominous status as a primary target for militants trying to force the military to end an offensive against their associates launched last month in the border region of South Waziristan, where al-Qaida and Taliban leaders are believed to be hiding.

Strikes in the past week alone have killed more than 50 people in the city, including 10 at the regional office of Pakistan's top intelligence agency, which was targeted by a massive truck bombing Friday. The agency, the Inter Services Intelligence, has been overseeing much of the country's anti-terror campaign.

On Saturday, a Taliban commander claimed responsibility for that attack and another targeting a police station the same day in neighboring Bannu district. He vowed the violence would continue.

"The suicide bombers were trained by me and I have a lot more volunteers to carry out more attacks," Qari Hussain Mehsud told an Associated Press reporter by telephone.

ASIAN BRIEFS

9 killed, 80 injured when train derails in India

JAIPUR, India (AP)—A speeding train derailed in western India, killing at least nine people and injuring more than 80. Fifteen cars of the New Delhi-bound train flew off the tracks Saturday and rolled onto their sides when the driver suddenly applied the brakes because of poor visibility in the region, said Vipin Kumar Pande, superintendent of police. A broken rail track punctured one car and killed some of the passengers, Pande told The Associated Press. Nineteen people were hospitalized with injuries, three of them in serious condition, Pande said, and more than 60 people with minor injuries had left for their homes after treatment.

NATO says insurgents killed during search

KABUL (AP)—NATO and Afghan forces killed several insurgents, including an armed woman, in a search operation in western Afghanistan on Saturday, the alliance said. The governor of Shindand district in Herat, where the operation took place, said three civilians were killed and three children were wounded when insurgents used a civilian house for cover during the fighting. NATO rejected claims that the operations had caused civilian casualties, saying the security force "protected several women and children present in the compounds, and no civilians were harmed during the operation."

No bars, no mistresses, Chinese officials warned

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese officials are being told to dump their mistresses, avoid hostess bars, and shun extravagances as part of the Communist party's efforts to clamp down on the corruption that is threatening its rule and sullying its reputation. The language of the new morality push, one of countless such campaigns informally under way, is surprisingly bold, often cutting through the bureaucratese to make a clear link between moral lassitude and corruption. One statistic trotted out at a recent speech to bureaucrats: 95 percent of officials investigated for corruption were found to be keeping mistresses.

NKorean cargo ship arrives in South after clash

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A North Korean cargo ship entered South Korean waters Saturday—a sign that trade has been unaffected by a recent deadly naval clash off their western coasts, an official said. The ship dropped anchor west of Seoul just one day after North Korea's military threatened to "take merciless military measures to defend" itself and warned that South Korea would be forced to pay a heavy price for the recent firefight over their disputed maritime border. A Unification Ministry spokesman said, however, that neither side has taken any measures to restrict inter-Korean trade—one of few legitimate sources of foreign currency for the impoverished communist North.

World

A PRESIDENT OF EUROPE?

Continent's unity is tested

PARIS (AP)—The European Union has battled long and hard for this moment: the imminent choice of its first president.

To get there, the EU strong-armed Irish voters, brushed aside hostile French and Dutch ballots, and pressured the Czech president into agreeing to a single leader to give Europe a strong voice on the world stage.

Yet after all that, EU leaders meeting Thursday may end up picking someone from a small country with little international power instead of a charismatic heavyweight to head this continental bloc of 27 nations, half a billion people and huge economic heft.

To pick a boss they can all live with, they must strike the right balance between big countries and small, east and west, socialists and conservatives, perhaps male and female. They must maneuver between proponents of a strong Europe and those who fear it—eurocentrics and euroskeptics, in the local parlance.

It's a diplomatic minefield.

The decision will help define Europe's future, the climax of a decade of agonized contortions and oft-thwarted efforts to make the EU about more than money and markets and common rules about what bananas Europeans can buy.

"The time has come to have a personality who will make an imprint ... a European mark" on world affairs from Iran's nuclear program to relations with Russia, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said last week.

"We should have weight in the world; we are 500 million people," he said. "We should participate in world events and not just finance them."

The early favorite was Britain's former prime minister, Tony Blair, but his candidacy has run into trouble. He cuts a big figure on the world stage—perhaps too big for the liking of other powerful figures such as French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

Few call Venice home, but it's not history, either

VENICE, Italy (AP)—A dozen gondolas snaked down the Grand Canal on Saturday in a mock funeral procession bemoaning Venice's approach to the dreaded status of living museum, with a population now below 60,000.

While the largely symbolic threshold is considered by some to signal the end of the city's viability, Venetian officials say reports of Venice's demise are premature, and even Saturday's somber funeral ended with a surprise, bright hope for rebirth.

In fact, while native Venetians have been fleeing the expensive lagoon city for cheaper and easier living on the mainland, the population of the historic center was officially 60,025 as of Thursday, up from the 59,992 it had fallen to in recent weeks.

AP

Native Venetians stage a mock funeral procession in Venice, Italy, Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009.

"They will have the funeral in a living village, not yet dead. And it won't die, even if it goes to 59,999," Mara Rumiz, the city official in charge of demographics, said in a telephone interview Friday.

She said the numbers don't take into account the inhabitants of Venice's islands—including glassmaking Murano and the Lido beach—nor the many who are not officially registered, including students. Together, they add another 120,000 souls.

But Venice must still resist becoming merely a tourist destination, Rumiz said.

WORLD BRIEFS

Britain investigating fresh Iraq abuse claims

LONDON (AP)—Iraqi civilians who were detained by British troops during the U.S.-led war have leveled some 33 allegations of rape and abuse against male and female soldiers, Britain's Ministry of Defense said Saturday. The allegations come in the wake of the British withdrawal from Iraq this year. One man says he was raped by two British soldiers while another claims he was sexually humiliated by both male and female personnel. Others allege they were stripped naked and photographed in the same style as the notorious pictures at Abu Ghraib, where abuses of prisoners by U.S. troops helped fuel anti-American sentiment.

Czechs celebrate 20 years since Velvet Revolution

PRAGUE, Czech Republic (AP)—Former Czech President Vaclav Havel opened the 20th anniversary celebrations of the Velvet Revolution with a concert attended by celebrities. Underground rocker Lou Reed, soprano Renee Fleming and folk singer Joan Baez performed to a crowd of about 500 gathered at 13th-century church in downtown Prague. Baez performed "We Shall Overcome" in both Czech and English to massive applause by an audience that included former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who was born in Prague. Fleming sang "Rusalka" by Antonin Dvorak and "Ave Maria" by Franz Schubert, and was then joined by Reed on his song "Perfect Day."

Opposition: Iran rulers more brutal than shah

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran's embattled opposition leaders accused the government of becoming more brutal than the shah's regime in Web statements Saturday, and authorities announced a new Internet crackdown aimed at choking off the reform movement's last real means of keeping its campaign alive. Two of Iran's top pro-reform figures said police used excessive force against anti-government protesters who took to the streets last week on the sidelines of state-sanctioned rallies to mark the 30th anniversary of the U.S. Embassy takeover.

Health & Fitness

Wearing a pedometer can be a big step in weight-loss battle

By LENNY BERNSTEIN
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What if there was a small, inexpensive device that was proven to boost your fitness, help you lose weight and lower your blood pressure? Would you use it, especially if doing so was nearly effortless?

Jane Bonin does. She has for the past eight months and swears by it. "It's just a way of tricking yourself into doing the right thing," says the 73-year-old writer and former college professor who lives in Washington.

Hundreds of people at the Office of Management and Budget have one. They've got them at the White House. More than 3,000 Stanford University employees have tried them, as have people in various workplaces.

And yet, buying a pedometer is not the first—or second, or third—piece of advice you typically receive when you turn to someone and say: "I really need to get in shape, but I hate exercising. What should I do?"

People who have pedometers get more exercise, lose weight and lower their blood pressure.

But it probably should be, says Dena Bravata, a physician and senior research scientist at Stanford who analyzed 26 studies of pedometer use and found clear evidence that people who have them get more exercise, lose weight and lower their blood pressure. In fact, the decrease in blood pressure was equivalent to results achieved through much more expensive interventions that involve doctors and pharmacists, she said. And in a relatively short time, many people were able to lower their body mass index enough to move from the "obese" to "overweight" category.

"What we found was, on average, that wearing a pedometer increased people's physical activity by about 2,000 steps per day," Bravata said. "That's equivalent to about a mile."

There is little dispute that walking is one of the best, cheapest and easiest things you can do for your health, especially if you're older than 50. And there is equally little disagreement that most people don't do enough of it.

For many, a pedometer helps break through psychological barriers by providing motivation, accountability and a sense of control, according to Bravata and people who use the devices.

As a rule, people overestimate the amount of exercise they get. Keeping track can be eye-opening. Falling short motivates people to find ways to walk more, Bonin says.

"I have walked the corridors of this building many a night, trying to work off my last steps," says Bonin, whose goal is 10,000 steps a day, or about five miles.

A pedometer allows you to make quick, beneficial changes, Bravata says. "You can diet like mad, exercise like mad all day long, and tomorrow morning, it's unlikely you would have made a significant difference" in your weight, she said. In contrast, if you attach a pedometer to your hip and take a reading of your baseline walking distance, tomorrow you can increase that distance, sometimes significantly.

It's important to keep your results in a log or diary, as anyone who has tried to stick to a diet can attest. You'll discern patterns, good and bad, in your exercise routine. Blank spots or days when you just can't squeeze in a walk provide added motivation.

"If you don't write it down, it's almost as if it didn't happen," says Bonin, who also attends stretching classes and swims each week.

But the single most critical factor in employing a pedometer is setting a step goal, Bravata said. In fact, those who wore one but didn't set a goal did not increase their physical activity, she said.

Somehow, 10,000 steps has become the standard goal, although according to a 2004 article by Catrine Tudor-Locke, a researcher at Louisiana State University, there appears to be no science behind the figure. Tudor-Locke says it may stem from a promotion by pedometer companies in Japan. Bravata says the actual size of the goal isn't as important as setting one that will improve your health and keeping after it—by parking farther from the office, taking the stairs or getting out for that lunchtime walk.

I wanted to see how difficult it would be to walk 10,000 steps in the course of my day, so I bought a pedometer for $21 at a sporting goods store. I wore it on four consecutive days—not enough for a true test of its effectiveness—with mixed results.

On a fairly sedentary Saturday that featured a lot of football watching, I logged 7,868 steps. (I didn't wear the pedometer on my 11-mile morning run.) Sunday included trips to Costco, the grocery store and an hour of leaf work in the yard, for a total of 13,300 steps. On Monday, a day of errand-running: 12,201 steps. And Tuesday, spent largely in the office: 9,667 steps.

I'm certain these numbers are inflated, possibly by quite a bit, because the pedometer often credited me with steps when I shifted my weight in a chair. Bonin says more expensive models like hers don't do this. They also can be connected to computers to download information quickly.

There are still open questions about pedometer use. I know people who became frustrated when they could not reach their goals and stopped wearing pedometers.

CDC'S SWINE FLU TOLL:
4,000 dead, 22 million ill

WASHINGTON (AP)—Estimates of deaths caused by the swine flu have grown to nearly 4,000 since April, roughly quadrupling previous estimates. But that doesn't mean swine flu suddenly has worsened.

Instead, the federal numbers made public Thursday reflect a long-awaited better attempt to quantify the new flu's true toll. Most cases still don't require a doctor's care.

Swine flu has sickened about 22 million Americans since April and killed about 540 children.

And it's still early in the season.

"I am expecting all of these numbers, unfortunately, to continue to rise," said Dr. Anne Schuchat of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "We have a long flu season ahead of us."

Tight supplies of vaccine to combat the illness continue: Not quite 42 million doses are currently available, a few million less than CDC had predicted last week.

A new Associated Press-GfK poll shows nearly 1 in 6 parents has gotten at least some of their children vaccinated against swine flu since inoculations began last month. An additional 14 percent of parents sought vaccine but couldn't find any.

Only about 30 percent of children routinely get flu vaccinations during a normal winter. That even this many have gotten vaccinated against the new flu, which scientists call the 2009 H1N1 strain, despite the shortage suggests CDC's target-the-young message has gotten through.

But three times as many adults have tried and failed to find vaccine for themselves as have succeeded.

And interest among the young adults who also are at high risk is waning fast, found the AP-GfK poll of 1,006 adults nationwide.

Schuchat urged patience in seeking vaccine.

"It's a marathon and not a sprint," she said. "More vaccine is being ordered and delivered and used every day."

AP

Scarlett Adkins, 1, is held by her mother, Kera Adkins, Thursday, Nov. 12, 2009 as she reacts to getting her H1N1 vaccine shot from nurse Rhonda Woolum in Ashland, Ken.

Until now, the CDC has conservatively estimated more than 1,000 deaths and "many millions" of new H1N1 infections. The agency was devoting more time to battling the pandemic than to counting it. Earlier figures were based on laboratory-confirmed cases even as doctors largely quit using flu tests months ago—and experts knew that deaths from things like the bacterial pneumonia that often follows flu were being missed.

Thursday's report attempts to calculate the first six months of the new H1N1 strain's spread, from April through mid-October. The CDC said:

■ Some 98,000 people have been hospitalized from this new flu or its complications, including 36,000 children, 53,000 adults younger than 65 and 9,000 older adults.

■ Deaths could range from a low of 2,500 to as many as 6,100, depending on how the data's analyzed. CDC settled on 3,900 as the best estimate.

■ Some 8 million children have become ill, 12 million adults younger than 65 and 2 million older adults.

In a typical winter, seasonal flu strains cause 200,000 U.S. hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths, the vast majority in people over 65. Seasonal influenza doesn't usually start circulating until November. Swine flu began a big climb in September, leading to what CDC called unprecedented high levels of illness so early in a season—and no way to know when the flu will peak.

The estimate of child deaths may seem especially surprising, considering the CDC's conservative count of lab-confirmed pediatric deaths a week ago was 129.

"We don't think things have changed from last week to this week," Schuchat stressed, explaining the importance of looking beyond those lab counts. It's "a better estimate for the big picture of what's out there."

The question now is what effect those estimates will have on a public that largely views swine flu as not that big a threat.

The AP-GfK poll, conducted last weekend, found just 23 percent of responders—and 27 percent of parents—were very likely to keep seeking vaccine.

US adult smoking rate rises slightly

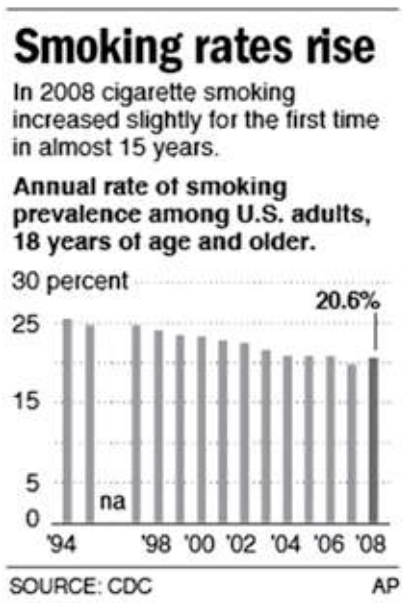
ATLANTA (AP)—Cigarette smoking rose slightly for the first time in almost 15 years, dashing health officials' hopes that the U.S. smoking rate had moved permanently below 20 percent.

A little under 21 percent of U.S. adults said they smoked, according to a 2008 national survey by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That's up slightly from the year before, when just 19.8 percent said they were smokers. It also is the first increase in adult smoking since 1994, experts noted.

The increase was so small, it could be just a blip, so health officials and experts say smoking prevalence is flat, not rising. But they are unhappy.

"Clearly, we've hit a wall in reducing adult smoking," said Vince Willmore, spokesman for the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, a Washington, D.C.- based research and advocacy organization.

There's a general perception that smoking is a fading public health danger. Feeding that perception are indoor smoking laws, cigarette taxes and Congress' recent decision to allow the Food and Drug Administration to regulate tobacco.



But health officials believe gains have been undermined by cuts in state tobacco control campaigns. Some advocates believe tobacco companies are overcoming increasing obstacles.

Cigarette marketing has persisted and is effectively reaching kids and minorities with messages about flavored or menthol products, said Dr. Clyde Yancy, president of the American Heart Association.

The tobacco industry also has been discounting cigarettes to offset tax increases and keep smokes affordable, Willmore said.

Between 1997 and 2004, the average retail price of a pack of cigarettes—adjusted for inflation—jumped 63 percent, and adult smoking declined about 15 percent. Between 2004 and 2008, the price rose just 2 percent, while adult smoking declined by just about 1 percent, he said, citing industry sales data.

"There's a clear correlation," Willmore said.

Cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of death and illness in the United States, and is a cause of cancers, heart disease and other fatal conditions.

Life & Style

Fact check: Palin's book goes rogue on some facts

WASHINGTON (AP)—Sarah Palin's new book reprises familiar claims from the 2008 presidential campaign that haven't become any truer over time.

Ignoring substantial parts of her record if not the facts, she depicts herself as a frugal traveler on the taxpayer's dime, a reformer without ties to powerful interests and a politician roguishly indifferent to high ambition.

Palin goes adrift, at times, on more contemporary issues, too. She criticizes President Barack Obama for pushing through a bailout package that actually was achieved by his Republican predecessor George W. Bush - a package she seemed to support at the time.

A look at some of her statements in "Going Rogue," obtained by The Associated Press in advance of its release Tuesday:

PALIN: Says she made frugality a point when traveling on state business as Alaska governor, asking "only" for reasonably priced rooms and not "often" going for the "high-end, robe-and-slippers" hotels.

THE FACTS: Although travel records indicate she usually opted for less-pricey hotels while governor, Palin and daughter Bristol stayed five days and four nights at the $707.29-per-night Essex House luxury hotel (robes and slippers come standard) overlooking New York City's Central Park for a five-hour women's leadership conference in October 2007. With air fare, the cost to Alaska was well over $3,000. Event organizers said Palin asked if she could bring her daughter. The governor billed her state more than $20,000 for her children's travel, including to events where they had not been invited, and in some cases later amended expense reports to specify that they had been on official business.

PALIN: Boasts that she ran her campaign for governor on small donations, mostly from first-time givers, and turned back large checks from big donors if her campaign perceived a conflict of interest.

THE FACTS: Of the roughly $1.3 million she raised for her primary and general election campaigns for governor, more than half came from people and political action committees giving at least $500, according to an AP analysis of her campaign finance reports. The maximum that individual donors could give was $1,000; $2,000 for a PAC.

Of the rest, about $76,000 came from Republican Party committees.

She accepted $1,000 each from a state senator and his wife in the weeks after the two Republican lawmakers' offices were raided by the FBI as part of an investigation into a powerful Alaska oilfield services company. After AP reported those donations during the presidential campaign, she said she would give a comparative sum to charity after the general election in 2010, a date set by state election laws.

PALIN: Rails against taxpayer-financed bailouts, which she attributes to Obama. She recounts telling daughter Bristol that to succeed in business, "you'll have to be brave enough to fail."

THE FACTS: Palin is blurring the lines between Obama's stimulus plan - a $787 billion package of tax cuts, state aid, social programs and government contracts - and the federal bailout that Republican presidential candidate John McCain voted for and President George W. Bush signed.

Palin's views on bailouts appeared to evolve as McCain's vice presidential running mate. In September 2008, she said "taxpayers cannot be looked to as the bailout, as the solution, to the problems on Wall Street." A week later, she said "ultimately what the bailout does is help those who are concerned about the health care reform that is needed to help shore up our economy."

During the vice presidential debate in October, Palin praised McCain for being "instrumental in bringing folks together" to pass the $700 billion bailout. After that, she said "it is a time of crisis and government did have to step in."

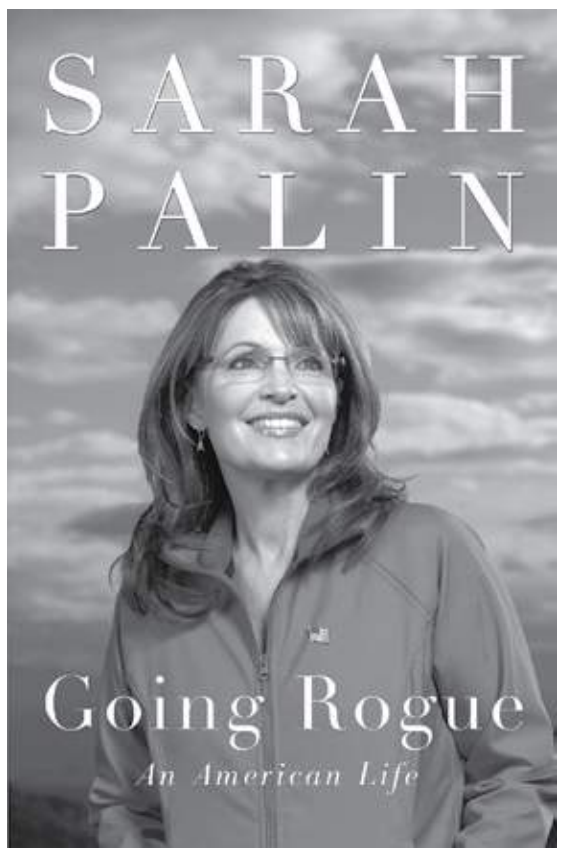
PALIN: Says Ronald Reagan faced an even worse recession than the one that appears to be ending now, and "showed us how to get out of one. If you want real job growth, cut capital gains taxes and slay the death tax once and for all."

THE FACTS: The estate tax, which some call the death tax, was not repealed under Reagan and capital gains taxes are lower now than when Reagan was president.

Economists overwhelmingly say the current recession is far worse. The recession Reagan faced lasted for 16 months; this one is in its 23rd month. The recession of the early 1980s did not have a financial meltdown. Unemployment peaked at 10.8 percent, worse than the October 2009 high of 10.2 percent, but the jobless rate is still expected to climb.

PALIN: She says her team overseeing the development of a natural gas pipeline set up an open, competitive bidding process that allowed any company to compete for the right to build a 1,715-mile pipeline to bring natural gas from Alaska to the Lower 48.

THE FACTS: Palin characterized the pipeline deal the same way before an AP investigation found her team crafted terms that favored only a few independent pipeline companies and ultimately benefited a company with ties to her administration, TransCanada Corp. Despite promises and legal guidance not to talk directly with potential bidders during the process, Palin had meetings or phone calls with nearly every major candidate, including TransCanada.



AP
In this book cover image released by Harper, "Going Rogue: An American Life," by Sarah Palin, is shown.

PALIN: Criticizes an aide to her predecessor, Gov. Frank Murkowski, for a conflict of interest because the aide represented the state in negotiations over a gas pipeline and then left to work as a handsomely paid lobbyist for Exxon-Mobil. Palin asserts her administration ended all such arrangements, shoving a wedge in the revolving door between special interests and the state capital.

THE FACTS: Palin ignores her own "revolving door" issue in office; the leader of her own pipeline team was a former lobbyist for a subsidiary of TransCanada, the company that ended up winning the rights to build the pipeline.

PALIN: Writes about a city councilman in Wasilla, Alaska, who owned a garbage truck company and tried to push through an ordinance requiring residents of new subdivisions to pay for trash removal instead of taking it to the dump for free - this to illustrate conflicts of interest she stood against as a public servant.

THE FACTS: As Wasilla mayor, Palin pressed for a special zoning exception so she could sell her family's $327,000 house, then did not keep a promise to remove a potential fire hazard on the property.

She asked the city council to loosen rules for snow machine races when she and her husband owned a snow machine store, and cast a tie-breaking vote to exempt taxes on aircraft when her father-in-law owned one. But she stepped away from the table in 1997 when the council considered a grant for the Iron Dog snow machine race in which her husband competes.

PALIN: Says Obama has admitted that the climate change policy he seeks will cause people's electricity bills to "skyrocket."

THE FACTS: She correctly quotes a comment attributed to Obama in January 2008, when he told San Francisco Chronicle editors that under his cap-and-trade climate proposal, "electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket" as utilities are forced to retrofit coal burning power plants to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Obama has argued since then that climate legislation can blunt the cost to consumers. Democratic legislation now before Congress calls for a variety of measures aimed at mitigating consumer costs. Several studies predict average household costs probably would be $100 to $145 a year.

PALIN: Welcomes last year's Supreme Court decision deciding punitive damages for victims of the nation's largest oil spill tragedy, the Exxon Valdez disaster, stating it had taken 20 years to achieve victory. As governor, she says, she'd had the state argue in favor of the victims, and she says the court's ruling went "in favor of the people." Finally, she writes, Alaskans could recover some of their losses.

THE FACTS: That response is at odds with her reaction at the time to the ruling, which resolved the long-running case by reducing punitive damages for victims to $500 million from $2.5 billion. Environmentalists and plaintiffs' lawyers decried the ruling as a slap at the victims and Palin herself said she was "extremely disappointed." She said the justices had gutted a jury decision favoring higher damage awards, the Anchorage Daily News reported. "It's tragic that so many Alaska fishermen and their families have had their lives put on hold waiting for this decision," she said, noting many had died "while waiting for justice."

PALIN: Describing her resistance to federal stimulus money, Palin describes Alaska as a practical, libertarian haven of independent Americans who don't want "help" from government busybodies.

THE FACTS: Alaska is also one of the states most dependent on federal subsidies, receiving much more assistance from Washington than it pays in federal taxes. A study for the nonpartisan Tax Foundation found that in 2005, the state received $1.84 for every dollar it sent to Washington.

PALIN: Says she tried to talk about national security and energy independence in her interview with Vogue magazine but the interviewer wanted her to pivot from hydropower to high fashion.

THE FACTS are somewhat in dispute. Vogue contributing editor Rebecca Johnson said Palin did not go on about hydropower. "She just kept talking about drilling for oil."

PALIN: "Was it ambition? I didn't think so. Ambition drives; purpose beckons." Throughout the book, Palin cites altruistic reasons for running for office, and for leaving early as Alaska governor.

THE FACTS: Few politicians own up to wanting high office for the power and prestige of it, and in this respect, Palin fits the conventional mold. But "Going Rogue" has all the characteristics of a pre-campaign manifesto, the requisite autobiography of the future candidate.

Palin says she didn't know Bristol was having sex

AP
In this photo released by ABC, former Alaska Governor and Republican Vice-Presidential candidate Sarah Palin, left, is photographed with ABC's Barbara Walters, at a New York City hotel, Friday, Nov. 13, 2009.

NEW YORK (AP)—Sarah Palin says she didn't know her daughter Bristol was sexually active before she learned the teenager was pregnant.

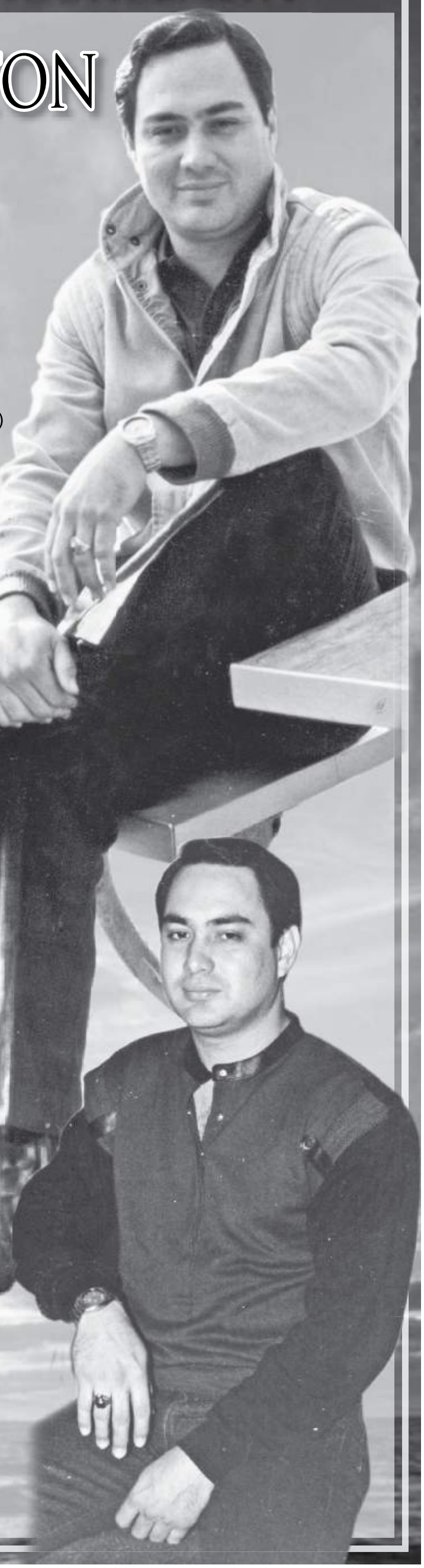
The former vice presidential candidate told ABC's Barbara Walters: "Truthfully, we were devastated."

Bristol was a high school senior when she gave birth to son Tripp in December. Her pregnancy was publicly announced just after Sarah Palin accepted John McCain's invitation to be his running mate.

ABC released that exchange between Walters and Palin on Saturday. Portions of their interview begin airing Tuesday on "Good Morning America" and will be shown at length Friday on "20/20". Palin is promoting her new book, "Going Rogue."

Death and Funeral Announcement

Paul Chandler Hamilton



Born to life on December 19, 1953; born to eternal life on November 8, 2009.

Wife: Thelma Majait Hamilton

Mother: Carmen Wesley Hamilton
Father: † Wilburn Chandler Hamilton
Godfathers: † Teodocio C. Wesley, Francisco A. Camacho
Godmother: † Vicenta A. Camacho

Children, In-laws, and Grandchildren:

Myra Pauline Hamilton/Jeffrey Heston (Joshua, Chad, Sterling, Zachary, and Jessica)
Retta Sue Hamilton/Jesse Torres
Dora Mae H./Juan I. Quitugua (Dexter, and Juan Jr.)
Paula Jane Hamilton (†Rica, Renae, Juan II, and Reiann)
Joanne Marie H./Peter Aldan (Brittney, Jacob, and Tiana)
Michelle Majait Hamilton/Jeffrey Tomokane (Brandon, Abbigelle, and Ethan)
Anthony Chandler Hamilton
John Chandler Hamilton
Matthew Chandler Hamilton

Reared Son: Ricardo Dado II

Sisters and In-laws:

Nadine H./Henry I. Sablan and children
Betty H./Mike Johnson and children
Ruby Jean H./Rick Northen and children

Survived by: Aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, godchildren, cousins, and friends.

Last viewing and respects are on Tuesday, November 17, 2009, at Nuestra Señora de la Paz.

Then at 8:00 a.m. our beloved husband and father will be escorted to Mt. Carmel Cathedral.

Mass of Christian Burial is at 11:00 a.m. followed by interment service at Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Chalan Kanoa.

Your prayers are greatly appreciated.

Thank You, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Olomwaay, Salamat Po.

The children and family

Bernard Madoff's jacket, watch auctioned in NYC

NEW YORK (AP)—It was about fascination with big money—and the life of a couple at the center of the biggest financial fraud case in U.S. history.

Bernard and Ruth Madoff's belongings fetched several times their estimated values at auction Saturday for a total of about $1 million, twice as much as the auctioneers had hoped for.

The fallen financier's blue satin New York Mets baseball jacket with his surname stitched on the back, valued at up to $720, sold for $14,500. The jacket carries its own special meaning: Team owners Fred Wilpon and Saul Katz were among the victims of Madoff's fraud.

Madoff's Hofstra College ring, estimated at $360, went for $6,000.

Excitement filled a Manhattan hotel ballroom as people participating in the auction, run by Pflugerville, Texas-based Gaston & Sheehan, bid for items they could afford without being as rich as Madoff was.

Charlie Blumenkehl raised his hand for a set of Madoff's golf irons, clinching them for $3,600, against a $350-to-$400 estimate.

"I just wanted Bernie's name on the clubs," the New Jersey fund manager said with a laugh, adding, "but I don't want his vibes to be transmitted—my fund is doing better than his."

Two pairs of Ruth Madoff's diamond dangle earrings sold for $70,000 each, against a pre-sale estimate of no more than $9,800 and $21,400. But the most highly prized item in the sale, one of Bernard Madoff's 17 Rolex watches, fetched only $65,000, paid by an unknown buyer. The watch was valued between $75,000 and $85,000.

The auction was organized by the U.S. Marshals Service, which seized the couple's properties—a penthouse on Manhattan's Upper East Side and houses in Montauk, N.Y., and Palm Beach, Fla.

Inside the homes were some of the items on the block Saturday, ordered forfeited as part of Madoff's sentencing after he pleaded guilty in a multibillion-dollar fraud that burned thousands of investors. Proceeds from the auction will be divided among his victims.

AP

A vintage Rolex "Monoblocco" chronograph wristwatch, also known as the "Prisoner Watch," made for Allied prisoners during World War II, is shown during an auction preview of items seized from Bernard Madoff's homes, in New York, Friday, Nov. 13, 2009.

The lots ranged from dishes, pens and stationery to decoy ducks, furs and the Rolex, dubbed the Prisoner Watch.

The Swiss chronograph watch was modeled on those made for World War II Allied airmen imprisoned in Germany, who used them to time prison patrols and plan a possible escape. This one graced the wrist of Madoff, now a 71-year-old inmate in a North Carolina prison, serving a 150-year sentence for defrauding investors for decades.

The sale sums up the Madoffs in a nutshell, auction observer Lark Mason said.

"They wanted to show off their lifestyle with big houses, yachts, jewelry," he said. "They didn't buy things they were passionate about—they just wanted more and more."

The nearly 200 lots were an assembly line of conspicuous consumption, fueled by proceeds from the tens of billions of dollars that Madoff's Ponzi scheme cost investors. Some investors were wiped out financially while the Madoffs thrived, buying up watches and jewelry.

Ruth Madoff has not been charged with any crime. But she agreed to give up her possessions in return for a promise that federal prosecutors wouldn't pursue $2.5 million not tied to her husband's fraud. The scandal forced her to move out of the $7 million penthouse where she and her husband lived.

At the auction, a lineup of other Rolex and Cartier models filled a giant screen, selling for up to $30,000 each. But the couple's tastes could also be downright common; seven Swatch watches went for $850, against an estimate of $100 to $150.

There was little of great artistic value in the Madoff homes, Mason said.

"They weren't interested in great art," he said.

Struggling MGM says it's looking for buyer

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Struggling movie studio Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc. is looking for a buyer.

The home of the James Bond and Pink Panther franchises said Friday it has begun to explore strategic options including "a potential sale of the company."

In a statement, MGM also said its lenders have agreed to grant the company another respite until Jan. 31 from interest payments on nearly $4 billion in debt.

The decision, reversing its refusal to sell a year ago, came during a conference call Friday between restructuring expert Stephen Cooper, now MGM's vice chairman, and the 140 lenders owed some $3.7 billion in bonds maturing in mid-2012, according to a person close to the situation.

The person was not authorized to speak publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The lenders agreed to seek outside investors for a new partnership, investment or sale of part or all of the company. Its most valuable asset is its library of 4,000 movie and TV-show titles including such as "Rocky" and "Dances With Wolves." It also owns subsidiary United Artists, headed by Tom Cruise, whose film "Valkyrie" grossed a respectable $200 million worldwide after its release last year.

But the company has fallen on hard times and the home video market has shrunk.

MGM's latest release, a remake of the 1980 musical "Fame," was panned by critics and quickly vanished from most theaters after its Sept. 25 release, making $42 million worldwide to date.

Financial adviser Moelis & Co. is expected to send out non-disclosure agreements and detailed financial information to interested parties by early next week, the person said.

Potential buyers include Time Warner Inc., the parent of the Warner Bros. studio, and News Corp., home of 20th Century Fox.

On Thursday, with rumors swirling of its potential sale, Lions Gate Entertainment Corp. Vice Chairman Michael Burns also said his company was interested in taking a look.

"They have fantastic franchises like James Bond, they have half of `The Hobbit.' Of course it's interesting to us," Burns told CNBC's Fast Money.

Iran artists in tug of war with government

BEIRUT (AP)—Iran's greatest master of traditional music, Mohammad Reza Shajarian, always avoided open clashes with his country's ruling hardline clerics.

So it was a bombshell when Shajarian—so revered that his audiences pelt him with roses—demanded state radio and TV stop broadcasting his music as a protest against the government. The state broadcaster complied.

What pushed Shajarian into action was the government's brutal crackdown on protests over the June 12 election that Shajarian and millions of other Iranians believe fraudulently gave a second term to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"After what happened, I said 'no way' and threatened to file a complaint against them if they continued to use my music," Shajarian told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

Iran's political turmoil has raised a culture clash as hundreds of musicians, actors, filmmakers, poets and writers have spoken out against the government for its suppression of dissent and arrest of thousands. In a particular embarrassment to the government, the filmmaker daughter of Ahmadinejad's own culture adviser sought asylum in Germany in October, citing the crackdown at home.

AP

This Nov. 11, 2009 photo shows Iranian legendary singer Mohammad Reza Shajarian, delivering a speech, in a ceremony commemorating the late musician Parviz Meshkatian in Tehran, Iran.

The government has responded by accusing artists of falling prey to foreign "enemies" and by stepping up pressure for their work to toe its ideological line. More than 100 artists have had their works banned or have been prevented from traveling abroad. Others have been detained.

Ahmadinejad's art adviser, Javad Shamaqdari, last summer threatened to ban artists from film festivals. "The enemy, which has been thwarted in its plans for a velvet coup, is trying to keep up the fever of their subversive activities at foreign art and cinematic events," he said in Tehran.

One TV producer says that since the election, authorities have unofficially barred actors who are considered unacceptable from appearing on shows.

"They tell us 'give us a list of artists you want to use.' When we give them the list, they say 'this and this person are not suitable,'" said the producer, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation.

Broadcast pioneer NBC prepares for cable takeover

NEW YORK (AP)—Eight decades after pioneering the concept of broadcasting, NBC is on the verge of a startling move that illustrates broadcast television's decline.

Cable TV operator Comcast Corp. is expected to buy a controlling stake in NBC Universal, perhaps as early as this week, bringing the network of Johnny Carson, Jerry Seinfeld, Bob Hope, Milton Berle and Tom Brokaw under the corporate control of the company that owns the Golf Channel and E! Entertainment Television.

"This is highly symbolic," said Tim Brooks, who had worked at NBC for 20 years and now writes books on television history.

Starting Sunday, Vivendi SA has an option to sell its 20 percent stake in NBC Universal. Majority owner General Electric Co. is expected to buy it and then sell a 51 percent stake of the entire NBC Universal unit to Comcast, which serves about a quarter of the nation's subscription TV households.

Broadcast people, the folks who remember when television was ABC, CBS, NBC and little else, used to look down upon cable.

The idea of broadcast TV was implied in the name; the networks tried to reach the broadest possible audience. For cable it's important to do something specific and do it well, and the audience doesn't need to be as large.

NBC Universal Chief Executive Jeff Zucker recognizes this. Cable properties such as USA, SyFy, CNBC and The Weather Channel mean more to NBC Universal's bottom line than staggering NBC, fourth place in the ratings.

And those cable properties—more than the flagship "Peacock" network—were the draw for Comcast. By owning more content, Comcast further hedges its bets as mainly a distributor of shows in case viewers ditch their cable TV subscriptions and migrate to the Internet, mobile devices or a platform that has yet to emerge. The company could charge for the shows or sell ads wherever the viewers are.

In a sense, NBC would become a pioneer again, as it seeks to stay relevant amid intensifying audience fragmentation.

NBC was established as the nation's first radio network in 1926. Its parent company, the Radio Corporation of America, made radios and realized the best way to get people to buy the product was to make sure there were interesting things to listen to.

"Without NBC, there wouldn't be broadcasting as we know it," said Walter J. Podrazik, a consulting curator at the Museum of Broadcast Communications.

Lauren Bacall, Roger Corman to get early Oscars

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Academy Awards won't be presented until March, but the first Oscar statuettes of the season were being handed out Saturday night at a private, black-tie dinner in Hollywood.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is breaking with tradition and presenting its honorary Oscars away from the televised ceremony. Actress Lauren Bacall, producer-director Roger Corman and cinematographer Gordon Willis were to each receive Oscar statuettes at the inaugural Governors Awards event.

The winner of this year's Irving J. Thalberg Memorial Award, producer John Calley, was to also receive his trophy at the star-studded dinner. Each of the four recipients were chosen by the academy's Board of Governors.

Annette Bening, Tom Hanks, Kirk Douglas, Anjelica Huston and Quentin Tarantino signed on as presenters for the evening,

AP

Actress Lauren Bacall, center, recipient of an honorary award at The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences 2009 Governors Awards, poses with her daughter Leslie Bogart, left, and son Stephen Humphrey Bogart, Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009, in Los Angeles.

which included 600 invited guests celebrating at the Grand Ballroom above the Kodak Theatre, the same room where the annual post-Academy Awards Governors Ball is held.

Morgan Freeman, Alec Baldwin, Steven Spielberg and other guests were serenaded by a violin quartet before the ceremony began in a room decked out in bronze and silver curtains with a giant Oscar statue at the center.

Bacall made her screen debut but with Humphrey Bogart in "To Have and Have Not" in 1944. She went on to star in more than 30 films, including classics such as "The Big Sleep" and "Key Largo."

Corman has directed more than 50 films and produced more than 300 during his five-decade career, including "It Conquered the World" and 1960's "The Little Shop of Horrors."

Willis is a two-time Academy Award nominee for "Zelig" and "The Godfather, Part III."

Calley's producing credits include "Postcards from the Edge," "The Remains of the Day," for which he earned a Best Picture Oscar nomination, "Closer" and "The Da Vinci Code."

Other guests expected Saturday include Jeff Bridges, James Cameron, Dennis Hopper, Ron Howard and Julie Taymor.

The event was being taped but not televised. Excerpts will be shown during the 82nd annual Academy Awards on March 7.

Eastwood made French Legion of Honor commander

PARIS (AP)—American screen icon Clint Eastwood was made a commander in France's prestigious Legion of Honor on Friday.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy presented the 79-year-old actor and director with the decoration, honoring his body of work, his longevity and his ability to delight audiences around the globe, according to the award citation.

Former French President Jacques Chirac had honored Eastwood as a knight of the Legion of Honor two years ago, and Friday's decoration was a step up for Eastwood to grade three on the legion's five-grade scale.

Speaking in English, Eastwood thanked Sarkozy and the French people.

"This is a wonderful honor," Eastwood said. "It is just a great pleasure for me. I really love France. I love movies, and I love the appreciation that the French people have for movies."

Eastwood promised to be fluent in French the next time he returned to the country.

Sarkozy bantered with Eastwood and asked the American how he managed to stay so fit. Sarkozy, 54, was hospitalized earlier this year after collapsing while jogging.

"You have to admit that there is a side about you that is a little annoying," Sarkozy said. "Physically, how do you do it?"

Napoleon Bonaparte created the legion in 1802. It recognizes military, cultural, scientific or social contributions to France, including by people who are not French citizens.

AP

U.S. actor and director Clint Eastwood, left, shakes hands with French President Nicolas Sarkozy after being awarded the "Commandeur de la Legion d'Honneur" (Commander of the Legion of Honor) at the Elysee Palace, in Paris, Friday, Nov. 13, 2009.

IRS papers allege Zsa Zsa Gabor has $118,321 tax bill

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Zsa Zsa Gabor's lawyer blames convicted swindler Bernard Madoff for a hefty tax bill owed by his client. According to documents obtained by The Associated Press on Friday, the Internal Revenue Service filed a lien of more than $118,000 for the years 2001 and 2002 against the 92-year-old actress on Oct. 5 in the Los Angeles County Recorder of Deeds.

Gabor lawyer Chris Fields estimates that Gabor lost about $7 million in Madoff's Ponzi scheme and the tax bill is part of the fallout. Fields says third-party money managers invested Gabor's money with Madoff.

Fields says Gabor and husband Frederic von Anhalt are pulling together their resources and working out a payment plan with the IRS.

AP

This May 1, 1990 file photo shows Zsa Zsa Gabor in a courtroom in Beverly Hills, Calif., during a probation hearing. Gabor's lawyer blames convicted swindler Bernard Madoff for a hefty tax bill owed by his client.

Denzel Washington cheers on son's 1st college game

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (AP)—Actor Denzel Washington was playing proud father as he cheered on his son Malcolm's first game with the University of Pennsylvania basketball team.

Washington sat three rows behind Penn's bench Friday night during the Quakers' season opener at Penn State. Wearing a black sweat shirt and black cap pulled down low over his forehead, the Hollywood star went virtually unnoticed in the Jordan Center crowd.

He declined to answer a reporter's question before the game, waving his arms and nodding in the direction of the Penn bench.

The 5-foot-9 Malcolm Washington is a walk-on guard at Penn. He did not play in Penn's 70-55 loss.

Penn's visit to Penn State to start the new season was perfect timing for Washington, who is in central Pennsylvania filming the movie "Unstoppable."

Mexico charges clinic owner for botched surgery

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Authorities have announced charges against the owner of a beauty clinic that allegedly performed a botched buttock job on Mexican rock star Alejandra Guzman.

The charges against Valentina de Albornoz carry a possible prison sentence of four to 13 years.

Guzman says she was hospitalized with an infection from buttocks injections she had to make herself "more beautiful."

Mexico City prosecutors announced the charges of causing injuries Friday, two days after Guzman filed a criminal complaint against the doctor who administered the treatment and the owner of the clinic where it was carried out.

Latin Grammy winner Guzman says she now wants to raise awareness about cosmetic procedures so other women don't suffer.

Wife draws line in bedroom in battle over man's smoking

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My wife of 25 years, in an effort to get me to stop smoking, refuses to have sex until I quit. It's been more than a year since we made love.

I love my wife with all my heart, and I always will. I plan to stop smoking, but not this way. She will not give in (or give out). I don't want to think of sex as her weapon, but it is. Any advice on how to cope with my unwinnable battle?

DESPERATE IN ARLINGTON, TEXAS

DEAR DESPERATE: Yes. You mentioned you plan to quit smoking, so why not start now? The letter below could have been written expressly for you. Once you no longer reek of stale tobacco, your wife may rediscover her passion and both your problems will be solved. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: On Thursday, Nov. 19, 2009, the American Cancer Society is celebrating the 34th Great American Smokeout, and we want to encourage your readers who smoke to quit. Research shows that smokers who quit can significantly increase their life expectancy.

A smoker who quits at age 35 gains an average of eight years of life expectancy. A person who quits at 55 gains five more birthdays to spend with loved ones.

Smokers who stop before age 50 cut their risk of dying in the next 15 years in half compared with people who continue to smoke. Ten years after quitting, the lung cancer death rate is about half of that of someone who continues.

Quitting smoking is not easy. People often have to try several times before they are successful. But the American Cancer Society is here to help. We have been making great progress in this country when it comes to people getting the message about not smoking—in fact, adult cigarette smoking declined to 19.8 percent in 2007.

Smokers who want to quit can call the society's Quit for Life program operated and managed by Free & Clear at (800) 227-2345 to speak with trained counselors who can help them develop a quit plan and set a quit date. The American Cancer Society and Free & Clear have helped a total of 1 million tobacco users in their attempt to quit smoking.

As the official sponsor of birthdays, the American Cancer Society is fighting for every birthday that's threatened by cancer in all communities. We hope you will join us in our movement to create a world with less cancer and more birthdays by sharing the message that the Great American Smokeout is the PERFECT day to make a plan to quit or to use as a quit date. Quitting smoking is one of the most important steps anyone can take to create a world with more birthdays.

ALAN G. THORSON, M.D., NATIONAL VOLUNTEER PRESIDENT, AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

DEAR DR. THORSON AND DEAR READERS: I am pleased to once again spread the word about the Great American Smokeout, a subject that has appeared in this column many times. Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of death in the U.S., and one-third of all cancer deaths could be prevented if people simply avoided tobacco.

The Great American Smokeout Web site (www.cancer.org/GreatAmericans) contains user-friendly tips and tools to help smokers quit and remain smoke-free. Quitting is the most precious gift you can give yourself and the people who love you. The Countdown Clock and Craving Stopper downloadable desktop applications are two of the free resources available to help you on the path toward quitting. Good luck!

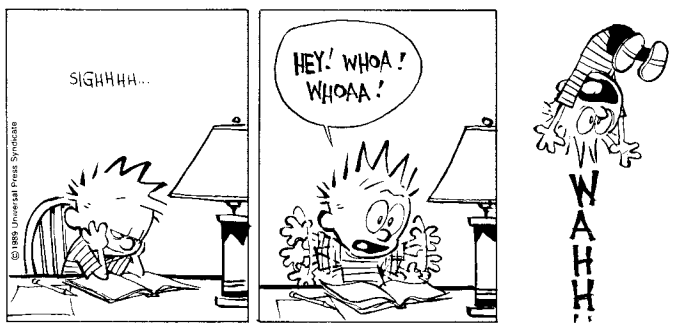
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

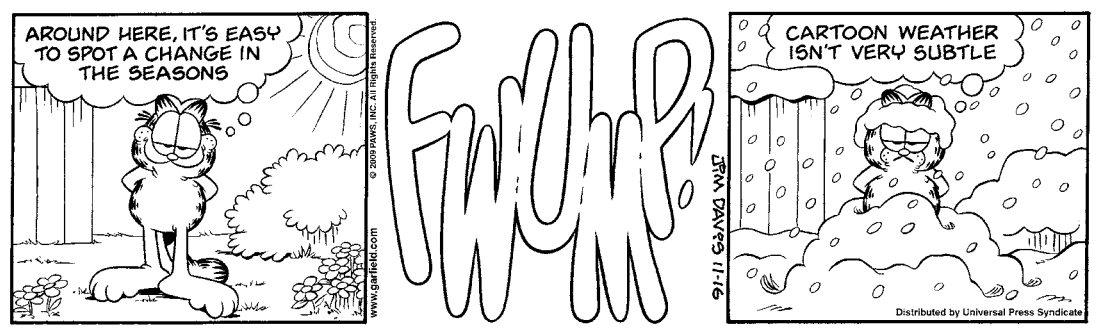
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis


AROUND HERE, IT'S EASY TO SPOT A CHANGE IN THE SEASONS
FWUMP!
CARTOON WEATHER ISN'T VERY SUBTLE
JIM DAVIS 11-16
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Adam@Home

By Bryan Basset

WHY THE SAD FACE, HONEY?
IT'S GRILL DECOMMISSIONING DAY. NO MORE SEARED MEAT UNTIL SPRING.
WHY NOT? THE SALEMS NEXT DOOR GRILL ALL WINTER.
OH, LAURA. DONT BE SO NAIVE. I DONT DARE RISK OFFENDING THE BBQ GODS.
BBQ GODS? AREN'T YOU THE GUY WHO TRIED TO MAKE A BREADLESS CHEESE SANDWICH ON THE GRILL?
IT'S NOT HOW OFTEN YOU FALL DOWN, LAURA. IT'S HOW OFTEN YOU GET UP.
IF I RECALL, YOU WERE "GETTING UP" BURNT CHEESE FROM INSIDE THE GRILL FOR MONTHS.
AND I'M STRONGER FOR IT.
www.gocomics.com
© 2009 Universal Uclick

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

DANG! WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT?! I HAVE A BIG DATE TONIGHT AND I GET A BIG ZIT ON MY FOREHEAD!
DO YOU THINK SHE'LL NOTICE?
MAYBE SHE'LL JUST THINK YOU HAVE A SUPERFLUOUS THIRD NIPPLE ON YOUR FACE.
www.gocomics.com
GLENN McCOY
© 2005 Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Uclick

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Trade blows
5 Light application
8 Slays, syndicate-style
12 Perspiration vent
13 Gorilla
14 Highland hillside
15 Verve
16 Lack of restrictions
18 Strong greenish blue
20 Pal
21 Restaurant list
23 CSA soldier
24 Impassioned
28 Pleasant
31 Judge Lance
32 Japanese, e.g.
34 Scoot
35 Pinnacle
37 Left to fend for oneself
39 Listener
41 Rim
42 Hitchcock or Nobel
45 One offering securities
49 Elsa's tale
51 Salver
52 Duel tool
53 Em halves
54 Being (Latin)
55 Ogler's look
56 Drenched
57 Week components

DOWN
1 Detail, for short
2 Game played on horseback
3 Bedouin
4 Change the title
5 Insanity
6 Springtime mo.
7 Surf-and-turf part
8 Leno's successor
9 Lynyrd Skynyrd classic
10 Willing, old-style
11 Transmit
17 Bobble
19 Golf legend Tony
22 Join together
24 By way of
25 And so forth (Abbr.)
26 Out of harm's way
27 Last to miss the deadline
29 Prompt
30 Conclude
33 Gripes repeatedly
36 Breadwinner
38 Fit inside one another
40 Sports arbiter
42 Cain's victim
43 Bound along
44 Sketched
46 — Minor (constellation)
47 Simple
48 Deli loaves
50 Away from WSW

Solution time: 24 mins.

■	S	H	O	R	T	■	G	U	I	D	E	S
P	O	U	R	E	R	■	A	N	T	E	U	P
U	L	T	I	M	O	■	B	I	S	T	R	O
N	O	S	E	■	L	A	S	T	■	R	O	T
■	■	■	L	O	L	L	■	S	R	I	■	■
B	R	A	■	D	E	C	K	■	E	T	U	I
A	U	D	R	E	Y	H	E	P	B	U	R	N
A	G	H	A	■	S	E	R	A	■	S	I	N
■	■	■	E	G	O	■	M	O	S	S	■	■
O	A	R	■	W	H	Y	S	■	L	E	G	O
G	R	E	E	N	E	■	E	D	U	C	E	D
L	I	N	K	E	D	■	N	O	S	H	E	D
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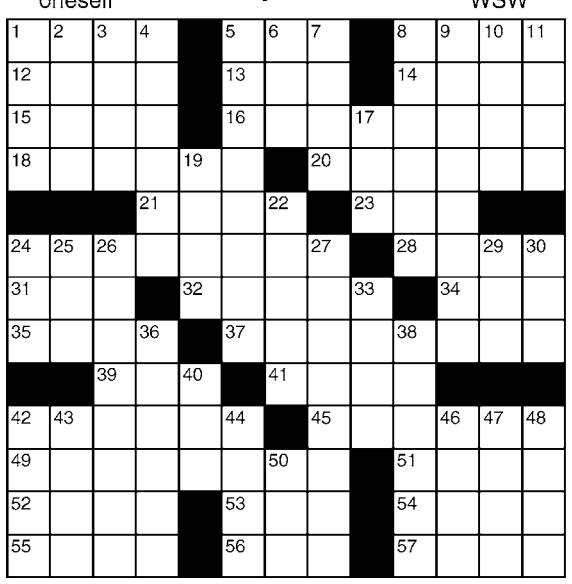
Saturday's answer 11-16



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Maggie Gyllenhaal, 32; Oksana Baiul, 32; Lisa Bonet, 42; Dwight Gooden, 45

Happy Birthday: It's your success that will give you the satisfaction you want. Now is the time to push hard and to let everyone know where you stand and what you are capable of doing. A residential move or transformation that will help you out financially will let you get things back on track and lessen your load. Your numbers are 4, 10, 16, 22, 38, 45, 48

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): There is a lesson to be learned when dealing with financial matters that will be valuable to you if you're being pressured to spend. You can expect the dynamics of a relationship you are in to change because of money issues. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Don't let other people's demands stop you from achieving your goals. You may feel like you are being torn in different directions, uncertain of where you stand and how you can reach your destination. However, if you stay focused, you will end up in the right spot. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): A job someone wants you to do will conflict with your personal plans. Don't make a snap decision without evaluating the consequences first. A loss may set the stage for things to come if you don't make the right choice now. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): A chance to get ahead professionally and personally is apparent if you network or get involved in industry events that pertain to something you want to pursue. Your ability to pull things together will enhance your reputation and bring you recognition. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Be careful not to offend someone or you may cause personal problems. Travel or getting involved in a learning or spiritual experience will help you make an important decision. Make improvements that will help you feel good about yourself. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Not everything will go according to plan but, if you explain your situation and what you are trying to accomplish, you will get the support you need to proceed. Avoid arguments with the potential to lead to irreconcilable differences. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): A change in what you do for a living will give you a new lease on life. Learn the skills required to go in a direction better suited to your needs. A new challenge will bring enthusiasm and renewed hope for a better future. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Speak up. Don't let things eat away at you when you should be clearing the air. Change will be good in the end, so stop fearing the inevitable and get on with it. Let go of old habits so you can move forward. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't jump the gun or try to get out of something using witty words or exaggerated stories. Secrets will be considered a form of lying and evasiveness will make someone think you are a coward. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): The people you work with and for will appreciate your industrious nature. The little extras you offer others will pay off in advancement and trust. Take the route that is most intriguing even if it pays less. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Stop dreaming about the past or what might have been. Focus on the here and now. Pull yourself together and start down the long and narrow road that leads to self-preservation and marketable skills. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Partnerships are a good way to make your money stretch—by sharing the costs both personally and professionally. Travel so you can meet face-to-face with someone to discuss serious matters. You will not be disappointed in the results. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, emotional, adaptable and serious-minded. You are passionate, possessive and impatient.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	2	3		5		1	4	
8								3
		9	3	6	1	8		
		6	7		5	2		
4		5				9		8
		7	1		9	3		
		4	2	9	6	7		
6								2
	7	2		3		6	5	

Difficulty Level ★ 11/16

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

4	1	6	2	7	8	9	3	5
3	9	2	5	6	4	8	7	1
8	5	7	1	3	9	6	4	2
2	8	3	4	9	7	5	1	6
6	4	1	8	5	3	2	9	7
5	7	9	6	1	2	4	8	3
1	2	8	7	4	5	3	6	9
9	6	5	3	8	1	7	2	4
7	3	4	9	2	6	1	5	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/14

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

NO-QUESTIONS-ASKED RETURN POLICIES **Solution: 5 letters**

A	C	S	S	N	O	I	T	O	M	O	R	P	L	S
E	C	O	M	M	E	R	C	I	A	L	D	R	E	A
E	X	C	M	R	E	E	N	I	L	N	O	O	C	T
T	N	P	E	P	E	T	A	L	A	E	C	T	N	I
N	G	S	I	S	L	T	I	R	L	A	U	E	A	S
A	S	E	U	R	S	Y	B	E	P	S	M	C	C	F
R	N	C	R	R	A	O	C	P	Y	E	E	T	U	A
A	O	N	E	O	E	T	R	T	S	L	N	I	S	C
U	I	A	F	O	R	O	I	I	T	U	T	O	T	T
G	T	T	U	O	V	L	T	O	E	R	A	N	O	I
P	P	S	N	E	A	R	Y	D	N	Ⓢ	T	S	M	O
O	E	I	D	U	E	S	S	T	I	M	Ⓘ	L	E	N
T	C	S	Q	V	A	L	U	E	E	F	O	Ⓖ	R	O
S	X	S	D	P	A	C	K	A	G	I	N	G	Ⓝ	T
D	E	A	D	L	I	N	E	N	I	L	C	E	D	E

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Last Saturday's Answer: Waterfalls

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10-004	Technical manager for Oil (One Position)	UNG; Negotiable	11/16/09	12/01/09

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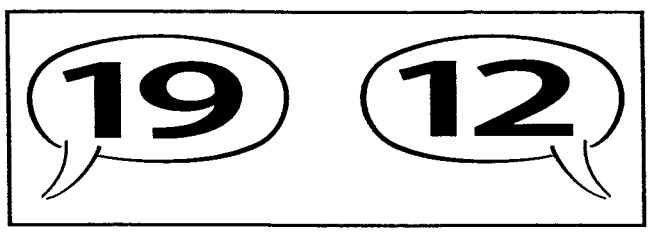
Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



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Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Lourdes Kisa Tian

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

LOURDES KISA TIAN, Petitioner, vs. **TIAN, SHAO AN,** Respondent.	**Civil Action No. 09-0567** **ORDER TO APPEAR OR PLEAD**

TO: THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT TIAN, SHAO AN:

YOU ARE HEREBY ORDERED TO APPEAR OR PLEAD by the 21st day after the fourth date of publication of this ORDER TO APPEAR OR PLEAD and defend the above entitled action in the CNMI SUPERIOR COURT, at the Office of Clerk of Court, CNMI SUPERIOR COURT, 1st Floor, Guma' Hustisia, Ilmwal Aweewe, House of Justice, Susupe Village, P.O. Box 500307, Saipan MP 96950-0307; and answer the Petition by Petitioner Lourdes Kisa Tian, and serve a copy of your answer upon **Robert Tenorio Torres**, attorney for Petitioner Lourdes Kisa Tian, at **Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya), P.O. box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950;** and in case of failure to do so, a default will be rendered against you according to the demand of the Petition, which has been filed with the Clerk of Court.

So ORDERED this 3rd day of November, 2009.

/s/ KENNETH L. GOVENDO
SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE

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LOST PASSPORT

Name	:	Jun Zhang
Passport No.	:	G28547959
Date of Birth	:	May 1, 1970
Contact No.	:	483-8085

Commonwealth Government Employees' Credit Union
PO Box 500135, Saipan MP 96950
Tel No. (670) 664-3900 * * Fax No. (670) 664-3910

EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT NO. CGECU-09-001
OPENING DATE: 11/09/09
CLOSING DATE: 12/09/09

This examination is for the purpose of developing an Open Competitive and Promotional Eligibility list. It is the policy of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands that the personnel system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

POSITION AND SALARY: **ACCOUNTANT** **$25,000.00 - $30,000.00 P/A**
The salary given will be determined by the qualification of the appointee.

LOCATION: Credit Union Office, Capitol Hill, Saipan

DUTIES:
The Accountant is responsible for the overall daily record and bookkeeping of the financial accounting of the Credit Union. He or she is charged with the responsibility to assist the General Manager in reporting, forecasting, formulating, and analyzing the financial, budgetary and economic activities and to assist in proposing changes to policies and procedures affecting the same areas of responsibilities of the Credit Union. He or she must be able to operate QuickBooks Accounting System.

The Accountant has the inherent responsibility to assist the General Manager in carrying out the principles and objectives delineated and prescribed by Public Law 9-52, its subsequent amendments, the Regulations, Bylaws, Board Resolutions, and all other policies and procedures and as directed by the Board of Directors through and/or by the General Manager. The Accountant reports and answers directly to the General Manager. The Accountant acts on behalf of the General Manager whenever the General Manager is absent from the Commonwealth, mentally or physically incapacitated or as directed by the Board of Directors.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:
The Accountant must possess a bachelor's degree or equivalent from a United States accredited academic institution preferably in the field of accounting with five (5) years accounting experience. However, academic degree in economics of finance or other field in the business administration will suffice as long as the applicant has five years working experience as an accountant. The Board may prescribe other qualifications.

APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABE AT THE CREDIT UNION OFFICE IN CAPITOL HILL, GOV'T BUILDING #1365, ANATAHAN DRIVE. APPLICANT MUST BE A US CITIZEN OR US PERMANENT RESIDENT.

INTERESTED PERSONS SHOULD SEND OR DROP OFF (ADDRESS ABOVE) THEIR CURRENT APPLICATION FORMS AND AN UPDATE RESUME TO:
Commonwealth Government Employees'
Credit Union
PO Box 500135
Saipan MP 96950

POSITION VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Executive Director

The Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association (NMASA) is seeking applications for the position of Executive Director.

The Executive Director will be committed and responsible for leading the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association (NMASA) within the strategic framework set by the NMASA Board of Directors, through the day-to-day management of NMASA, the development and implementation of initiatives in sport, and in identifying and responding to the challenges within the sports sector.

Key responsibilities include:
- Providing leadership in establishing and implementing national sport strategies to improve participation in organized sport, at the community level, by all the people of the Northern Marianas.
- Creating a successful ongoing Corporate Sponsorship, Marketing and Merchandising Program.
- Creating an effective fundraising program to ensure Team Marianas is fully represented at the Micronesian and Pacific (Mini) Games.
- Developing funding and capacity building partnerships for NMASA with international and regional sports agencies.
- Planning and Organizing the Marianas Games for 2010 and 2011, and working with the Marianas Games Council.
- Attracting international events to the Northern Marianas by working with the Marianas Visitors Authority and national sports federations.
- Organizing Team Marianas to achieve excellence in sports performance to its full potential.
- Developing NMASA and Team Marianas brands and managing an effective communications program for NMASA.
- Driving support for appropriate governance and strategic planning for national sporting federations.
- Providing leadership in developing partnership and capacity building with sports organizations and stakeholders in other sectors (such as health, education, and community services).
- Ensuring that all accountability, reporting and compliance requirements are met.

Suitable applicants with relevant tertiary qualifications and experience in sports management, management and / or business, demonstrated experience in planning, organizing and administration of sports and events, a strong marketing and communications background with the capacity to think and plan at the strategic level and act at the operational level, and demonstrated success with corporate sector fundraising with a proven commercial outlook will be given priority in the selection process.

Applicants should have a sound knowledge of Northern Marianas sports, its challenges, and an understanding of its place in Northern Marianas society and culture, knowledge of the NMASA's and Government's objectives for sport and physical activity, and with proven experience in sports and related activities.

Applicants should exemplify personal drive, proactiveness and high energy, have the proven ability to shape strategic thinking and achieve results, demonstrate the ability to cultivate strong working relationships, and the ability to communicate, and have demonstrated success in achieving high level credibility with stakeholders and the ability to relate effectively to people at all levels.

An attractive package commensurate with the seniority of the role will be available to the successful candidate. However, it must be noted that the Executive Director will be directly involved in raising funds that support ongoing employment of the Executive Director.

Resumes with names and contact details of three (3) references, should be sent to the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association (NMASA) no later than November 30th, 2009. Documents will not be returned.

By hand: Law Offices Michael A. White – 2nd Floor, Joeten Susupe Commercial Building
By mail: Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association (NMASA)
P.O. Box 502476
Saipan MP 96950
By email: mwhite@saipan.com
Closing date: 30th November 2009

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ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Jennings scores 55, leads Bucks past Warriors

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Brandon Jennings was shut out in the first quarter. Then he went to work and wiped out a record held by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

Jennings scored 55 points, breaking Abdul-Jabbar's franchise rookie record, to lead the Milwaukee Bucks to a come-from-behind 129-125 victory Saturday over the Golden State Warriors.

Jennings poured in 29 points in the third quarter, then 16 in the fourth to hold off the Warriors and become only the third Bucks player to score more than 50. The last to do it was Michael Redd, who set the franchise record with 57 points against Utah on Nov. 11, 2006.

"It was a very, very impressive performance for anyone, let alone a rookie in his seventh game," Milwaukee coach Scott Skiles said. "We just gave the ball to Brandon and let him go to work."

The No. 10 pick in the draft topped the 51 points scored by Abdul-Jabbar, then Lew Alcindor, on Feb. 21, 1970. The NBA rookie record was set by Wilt Chamberlain with 58 points for Philadelphia against Detroit in a January 1960 game in Bethlehem, Pa.

It was also the most points scored by a rookie since Earl Monroe had 56 on Feb. 13, 1968, and the second-most by a player under the age of 21, only topped by the 56 points scored by LeBron James on March 20, 2005.

"I was scoreless after the first quarter and really struggling," said Jennings, who hit 21 of 34 shots after hitting just one of his first seven shots. "I just started getting in the groove and felt really good in the third quarter."

The 29 points by Jennings were the most ever scored in a quarter against the Warriors. During the period, Jennings hit four 3-pointers and an assortment of jumpers and driving layups as he took over the game. At several points after scoring, he waved his arms in the air to get the crowd to cheer louder.

In all, he hit 12 of 13 shots in the quarter, his only miss a 3-point attempt with 5.9 seconds remaining. Jennings said after he hit his second shot in the third quarter, he could tell he was "in a zone."

"I was just trying to do whatever I could to help us win," he said. "We were out of sync in the first half and really needed to step it up."

Skiles said he told Jennings after the game, "Great game, get some rest tomorrow and (say) hello Jason Kidd on Monday." The Bucks play the Dallas Mavericks on Monday.

Bucks center Andrew Bogut said he was in position several times in the third quarter for offensive rebounds, but wasn't needed.

"I was just waiting for it to come off the rim, but it just kept going straight through, which makes it easier for me," he said. "But it could have padded the stats a little bit if he missed one or two of them."

Warriors coach Don Nelson called Jennings' effort "probably the best rookie performance I've ever witnessed in 30-some years coaching."

"We tried to handle him every way possible," Nelson said.

Warriors reserve Corey Maggette said Jennings had a "special game," one he had not seen in a long time.

"That was a great performance," Maggette said, shaking his head. "I don't know if anyone has done that since Magic (Johnson). He was something pretty special tonight."

AP

Milwaukee Bucks' Brandon Jennings drives to the basket against the Golden State Warriors in an NBA basketball game Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009, in Milwaukee.

The Bucks won their fourth straight game for the first time in more than two years. The Bucks (5-2) are off to their best start since 2005, the last season the team made the playoffs.

Bogut added 19 points and 11 rebounds for the Bucks.

Monta Ellis led the Warriors (3-6) with 26 points and Maggette added 25.

Jennings hit a 3-pointer from the top of the key with 2:15 to give the Bucks a 117-115 lead. Luke Ridnour then hit a driving layup with 1:40 remaining to increase the Bucks' lead to 119-115. After an offensive foul on Maggette, Jennings hit another jumper.

Maggette made a layup, was fouled and hit the free throw to cut the lead to 121-118, but Jennings came back and hit a 3-pointer from the top of the key with 34 seconds remaining and the Bucks held on to win.

The Warriors lost starting guard Kelenna Azubuike in the first quarter. Azubuike drove across the lane with 9:12 remaining in the quarter and slipped on the floor. He immediately grabbed his left leg and screamed in pain. After a five-minute delay, Azubuike left the court on a stretcher cart and went to the Warriors' locker room.

Heat 81, Nets 80

At Miami, Dwyane Wade's last-second 3-pointer left lifted Miami past undermanned and winless New Jersey.

Wade's shot was the 17th tie or lead change in the fourth quarter and came after the Nets' Brook Lopez tipped in Rafer Alston's missed runner with 4.1 seconds to go.

Before the basket by Lopez, the Heat had tied the game on a banked-in 3-pointer by Quentin Richardson with 25 seconds to go.

Wade finished with 22 points, and Udonis Haslem had 28 for Miami.

Lopez and Trenton Hassell each finished with 17 points for New Jersey, which has lost 10 straight games.

Cavaliers 107, Jazz 103

At Cleveland, LeBron James' three-point play with 28 seconds remaining lifted the Cavs to their fourth straight victory.

James was 6 of 15 from the floor, but finished with 21 points, six rebounds and nine assists.

Carlos Boozer scored 25 points for Utah.

Pacers 113, Celtics 104

At Indianapolis, Danny Granger scored 29 points and Dahntay Jones added a season-high 25 as Indiana handed Boston its second straight loss.

Ray Allen had a season-high 24 points for Boston.

Thunder 101, Spurs 98

At San Antonio, Kevin Durant scored 25 points as Oklahoma City spoiled the return of Tim Duncan and Tony Parker to San Antonio's lineup.

The Thunder handed the Spurs their first home loss in five games this season despite Duncan and Parker returning after missing two games because of ankle injuries.

Duncan had 22 points and 10 rebounds but attempted just one shot in the fourth. Parker scored 17 points and missed a 3-point try at the buzzer.

Hawks 121, Hornets 98

At Atlanta, Joe Johnson scored 26 points and Jamal Crawford added 21 as Atlanta beat New Orleans for its fourth straight victory.

The Hornets were without Chris Paul, who stayed home after spraining his ankle the night before, and have lost three straight and five of six.

Grizzlies 97, Timberwolves 87

At Memphis, Marc Gasol scored 17 points and matched his career high with 16 rebounds, and Rudy Gay and O.J. Mayo had 19 points apiece to help Memphis snap a seven-game losing streak and hand Minnesota its 10th straight loss.

Corey Brewer scored 16 points for Minnesota.

Pistons 106, Wizards 103

At Washington, Ben Gordon scored 29 points, Charlie Villanueva added 25 and Detroit held Washington to one field goal over the final 5 minutes.

Earl Boykins, playing his first NBA game in more than 1Ω years after signing with Washington on Wednesday, had 20 points for the Wizards.

Trail Blazers 80, Bobcats 74

At Charlotte, Brandon Roy scored 25 points, Andre Miller added 15 and Portland improved to 8-3 with its sixth straight victory.

Bulls 94, 76ers 88

At Chicago, Luol Deng and Kirk Hinrich each scored 19 points to help Chicago end a two-game losing streak.

Derrick Rose, John Salmons, Brad Miller and Joakim Noah each added 14 points. Andre Iguodala led Philadelphia with 24 points.

League-wide retirement of No. 23 seems unlikely

NEW YORK (AP)—LeBron James may persuade NBA players to give up their No. 23s, but a leaguewide retirement of Michael Jordan's number seems unlikely.

James said on Thursday that he is considering switching his number next season and wants other players to do the same in honor of Jordan, the Hall of Famer who is often regarded as the league's best player ever.

Major League Baseball retired Jackie Robinson's No. 42 and the NHL did the same with Wayne Gretzky's No. 99, but that hasn't been done in the NBA. Spokesman Tim Frank said on Saturday that "retiring a player's number is a decision that has been made by the teams" and not the league.

The NBA has no policy preventing every player wearing No. 23 from petitioning for a change, but players generally have to wear a number five years before they can switch.

There are 13 No. 23s in the NBA, though James is the only superstar. Oklahoma City rookie Byron Mullens ended up with the number after finding his preferred No. 32 was retired by the organization for Seattle SuperSonics great Fred Brown, and would be open to a switch.

"I don't have a problem," Mullens said. "I'm a rookie so I don't have no say-so. It's Jordan, man. His number should be retired from the NBA. If it is, then congratulations and good for him. If it's not, then I guess I'll stick to it. I was kidding around with my teammates, though. I told them, 'Jordan's going to have to pay me out.'"

Knicks rookie Toney Douglas wasn't so sure, saying he's worn No. 23 since he was 3 years old.

Any players wanting to switch would have to officially notify the league by early March. James, who said he would probably change to No. 6, his number with the U.S. Olympic team, would not need permission to change if he leaves Cleveland as a free agent.

James first made his comments during an on-air interview on TNT following the Cavaliers' victory over the Heat. Jordan was at the game in Miami—where Heat president Pat Riley retired the number in 2003 even though he never played for the franchise. No Miami player has worn No. 23 since Cedric Ceballos in 2001.

Lakers coach Phil Jackson, who coached Jordan in Chicago, endorsed the idea, though noted it might be "a little step on the toes for a guy like Magic (Johnson) or (Larry) Bird."

That seems to be one reason for disagreement with James' plan. Charles Barkley said after James' interview that Johnson and Bird "had a greater impact on the game than Michael Jordan."

The other players wearing No. 23 are: Kevin Martin (Sacramento), Stephen Graham (Charlotte), C.J. Watson (Golden State), Marcus Camby (Los Angeles Clippers), Jodie Meeks (Milwaukee), Devin Brown (New Orleans), Lou Williams (Philadelphia), Jason Richardson (Phoenix), Martell Webster (Portland) and Wesley Matthews (Utah).

Tiger puts on a show to win Down Under

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Tiger Woods gave record crowds at Kingston Heath what they wanted to see—exquisite shots and a closing round of 4-under 68 to win the Australian Masters on Sunday for his seventh victory of the year.

In his first trip Down Under in 11 years, Woods put on quite a show for his $3 million appearance fee.

Woods pulled away from a three-way tie for the lead with three birdies on his opening six holes, then seized control with a tee shot to a back pin on the par-3 15th that covered the flag and stopped 6 feet away for his final victory.

He wound up with a two-shot victory over Greg Chalmers, who simply couldn't keep up along the back nine.

Woods has won 82 times around the world and in 13 countries at official tournaments. It was his first victory in Australia, where the government estimates its return on paying half of the appearance fee was some $20 million.

The crowd approached 25,000 all four days, giving Kingston Heath the look and the energy of a major championship. Woods slipped on a jacket for winning this Masters—gold, not green—and wrapped up his two-week international swing with a familiar outcome.

AP

Tiger Woods from the United States holds the winner's trophy at the Australian Masters golf tournament at Kingston Heath Golf Club in Melbourne, Australia, Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009.

Asked what his legacy would be in Australia, Woods smiled and said, "I got a W."

"That was the goal this week," said Woods, who finished at 14-under 274.

"I'm very thankful to have a chance to play in front of great people and put together some good rounds."

It was a sloppy round Saturday that turned the final day into a race.

Woods showed early, however, that he had fixed whatever was wrong. With a stiff breeze in his face, Woods ripped a 3-wood to the par-5 opening hole and the gallery erupted when it landed near the hole and rolled 30 feet away for a birdie.

Still tied with Chalmers, Woods took on a left pin at the par-4 fifth that stopped 3 1/2 feet away, and followed that with a delicate pitch from about 75 yards to another dangerous pin, this one back and to the left at the edge of a deep bunker. It checked up at the ridge and trickled down to inside 2 feet.

About the only thing that flustered Woods was a photographer standing close to him on the 13th, and shooting two frames in the middle of his swing. That led to his lone bogey, and it bothered Woods to the point that he rushed through his shots on the par-5 14th for another par, allowing Chalmers to stay close.

Those hopes ended on the 15th, however, and Woods settled for pars coming in.

"You had to make some birdies early, and I was able to do that," Woods said. "I kept it going most of the day."

Jason Dufner, the American who is spending three weeks overseas, closed with a 70 to tie for third at 10-under 278 with Francois Delamontagne of France. James Nitties, who started out tied for the lead, shot 73 and finished alone in fifth, followed by Adam Scott, who closed with a 69 for his second straight top 10 on the European tour.

Woods has one tournament remaining—his Chevron World Challenge in California the first week of December that counts toward the world ranking for the first time.

It was the sixth season in which Woods has won at least seven tournaments around the world.

Mangini denies Lewis claims that Browns overworked

BEREA, Ohio (AP)—As Jamal Lewis backtracked on his stinging comments directed at Cleveland coach Eric Mangini for overworking his players, several of the Browns gathered near the running back's locker. One of them even stood on a nearby chair.

Soon, the Browns began a chant.

"J-Lew, J-Lew, J-Lew," they hollered.

One day after his anti-Mangini rant, Lewis was being cheered by his teammates.

Maybe because he stood up to his coach.

On Friday, Mangini defended the length and intensity of his practices after Lewis had complained that Cleveland's players are being worked too hard.

Lewis asserted on Thursday that Mangini was wearing out his players during the week with 2 1/2- to 3-hour workouts, and that by the time kickoff rolls around on Sunday, they have nothing left. Mangini maintains his practices are not any longer or more physical than ones he's conducted in the past.

"I feel good about the way we practice, the time we practice," said Mangini, 1-7 in his first season with Cleveland. "Two hours of work on the field is a very reasonable time. The only time that practices are extended is if we don't execute something the right way."

Mangini said that he and Lewis, a team captain, had a "good conversation" on Thursday and discussed their differences. Mangini did not provide any details of their meeting and said he does not view Lewis' comments as detrimental conduct.

"Like with any conversation, sometimes you agree on things, sometimes you change some things, sometimes you agree to disagree," he said. "You appreciate everybody's perspective and input and then you make the decision that you think is best for the team."

Mangini stressed that his workouts are rarely longer than two hours—with a 30-minute walkthrough.

"For the record, it's two hours," he said with emphasis. "That's the facts. That's the reality of it. It's two hours a day. Less on Friday."

Following Friday's workout, Lewis said he appreciated the chance to meet with Mangini. Then, as he has done in the past, Lewis said the media had twisted his comments.

"We got a chance to talk and exchange ideas and everything and get a view of what he's trying to accomplish and what's going on," the 10-year veteran said. "Basically got a chance to talk and settle things out. I let him know that your guys' story was kind of blown out of proportion and it was worded and went in a certain way. But that's how the media is."

Browns tight end Robert Royal said the spontaneous cheering for Lewis had nothing to do with Thursday's events.

"Naw," he said. "We pick on each other all the time. At the end of the day, I think we had a good practice and guys were having a little fun messing around with him."

Royal also said Mangini has been portrayed unfairly as a tyrant.

"He's a likeable guy," Royal said. "If he wasn't, you'd see a whole bunch of guys in the locker room divided. But I think for the most part guys still believe in what he's trying to teach, his philosophy. He's a good guy."

During his rant on Thursday, Lewis said Mangini was pushing his players too hard.

"You can work as hard as you want," he said. "You can work all day, seven days a week all the way up to Sunday in practice. But at the same time, if you're going to work like that, then maybe on Sunday you're probably not going to get what you want out of your players."

Mangini doesn't feel his players are beat up by game time.

"Some of the things that have happened on game days are things that we can control by protecting the football better, by communicating better, by all those different things that you try to improve week in and week out," he said. "In terms of volume of practice, it's significantly less than my first year in New York and we went 10-6 there."

Lewis said he and Mangini attempted to work through their differences.

"We talked and he told me why we do the things that we do and what he's looking for and basically my job is to come out here and lead by example and help everybody out," he said.

Lewis' comments on Thursday came a few hours before Browns practice squad player, defensive end Keith Grennan, sustained a serious knee injury during a post-practice "opportunity period." Mangini confirmed Grennan's injury but did not specify its nature or severity.

Grennan is the second Browns player injured during the post-practice drills. Earlier this season, rookie running back James Davis suffered a season-ending shoulder injury during one such workout.

Mangini defended the sessions as a chance for players to get more repetitions. He cited linebacker Marcus Benard, signed from the practice squad this week, as an "opportunity period" success story. Mangini said the voluntary sessions were also held when he coached under Bill Belichick in New England, where it helped a young Tom Brady develop as a quarterback.

"I believe in this fundamentally," Mangini said. "Over time, so many guys have benefited from it. I think it increases the possibility of success."

MLB BRIEFS

Varitek exercises option to remain with Red Sox

BOSTON (AP)—Catcher Jason Varitek exercised his $3 million option to stay with the Boston Red Sox on Wednesday, choosing to remain with the team as a backup to Victor Martinez rather than become a free agent. Boston declined to exercise its $5 million club option on Monday, and Varitek then had two days to decide whether to exercise his player option at the lower price. The 37-year-old Varitek was Boston's starting catcher for nine of 10 seasons through 2008, except in 2001 when he was limited to 51 games because of injury. He was the regular last season until Boston obtained Martinez from the Cleveland Indians in a trade on July 31. Boston exercised a $7.7 million club option for Martinez on Monday. Since coming to Boston from Seattle with pitcher Derek Lowe for reliever Heathcliff Slocumb in July 1997, Varitek hit .259 with 175 homers and 705 RBIs. But he slumped the past two seasons, hitting .220 in 2008 and then a career-low. 209 this year. He also threw out just 10 of 118 runners attempting to steal this year, according to STATS LLC. Frequently praised by pitchers for his game-handling ability, Varitek caught 108 games last year, 106 of them starts. Most were before Martinez arrived at the trade deadline. Varitek holds the Red Sox record with 1,381 games as a catcher.

Report: Clemens moves to have McNamee suit tossed

NEW YORK (AP)—Lawyers for Roger Clemens filed a motion in Brooklyn federal court to dismiss a defamation lawsuit by the pitcher's former trainer, claiming statements that accused Brian McNamee of trying to shake down Clemens were not serious. Joe Roden, one of the attorneys representing Clemens, said the seven-time Cy Young award winner, lawyer Rusty Hardin and others were not serious when they questioned McNamee's mental state and accused him of manufacturing evidence, the New York Daily News reported Thursday. "They are part of the public battle of words between the two camps, and in no way suggest to the average reader that McNamee is actually mentally unfit," wrote Roden, a lawyer with Hardin's firm. The evidence referred to are used syringes and bloody gauze pads McNamee turned over to federal authorities. McNamee has said he injected Clemens with steroids and HGH over a period of several years, a claim the former pitcher has vehemently denied.

PACQUIAO

From Page 28

MGM Grand arena.

Pacquiao dropped Cotto with a right hand early in the third round, but he wasn't badly hurt and came back to finish the round strong. But after Pacquiao put Cotto on the canvas with a big left hand late in the fourth round, the Puerto Rican was never the same again.

Cotto won two rounds on the scorecards of two ringside judges and just one round on the card of the third. The Associated Press gave Cotto just the first round.

"Our plan was not to hurry, but to take our time," Pacquiao said. "It was a hard fight tonight and I needed time to test his power."

Cotto's face was marked early and he was bleeding midway through the fight as Pacquiao kept bouncing around and throwing punches in his unorthodox southpaw style. He tried to keep taking the fight to Pacquiao, but by then his punches had lost their sting and his only real chance was to land a big punch from nowhere.

"He hit harder than we expected and he was a lot stronger than we expected," Cotto's trainer, Joe Santiago, said.

Cotto fought gamely, but in the later rounds he was just trying to survive as blood flowed down his face and Pacquiao came after him relentlessly. Santiago tried to stop the fight after the 11th round, but Cotto went back out to take even more punishment before a final flurry along the ropes prompted referee Kenny Bayless to end it.

Cotto's wife and child, who were at ringside, left after the ninth round, unable to watch the beating any longer. They later accompanied him to a local hospital for a post-fight examination.

"My health comes first. I just want to make sure I'm fine, but I feel great. I'm swollen but that's all," Cotto said.

His face swollen, Cotto was bleeding from his nose and his cuts, and he simply couldn't stop Pacquiao from bouncing inside and throwing both hands at will.

"Manny Pacquiao is one of the best boxers I ever fought," Cotto said.

Pacquiao, coming off of spectacular wins over Oscar De La Hoya and Ricky Hatton, added another one against Cotto, who had lost only once and held the WBO version of the welterweight title.

Pacquiao did it in his trademark way, throwing punches in flurries and from all angles until Cotto began to slow down. Then he pursued him nonstop until the end.

The fight likely will set up an even bigger one against Floyd Mayweather Jr., and many in crowd were already chanting, "We want Floyd! We want Floyd."

"I want to see him fight Mayweather," trainer Freddie Roach said.

Mayweather may have second thoughts after Pacquiao did what no fighter has done before—win a belt in a seventh weight class. More impressive, though, is how he has fought, dismantling opponents despite moving up consistently from 106 pounds to the 144 he weighed for the fight.

The welterweight ranks will be the last ones Pacquiao conquers, though.

"This is the last weight division for me," Pacquiao said. "It's history for me and more importantly a Filipino did it."

He was so dominant in the later rounds that Cotto was fighting backward most of the way, simply trying to survive. Pacquiao was credited with landing almost twice as many punches—336-172—as Cotto.

"I knew when Cotto started backing up, the fight was over," Roach said.

Pacquiao earned a minimum $13 million, while Cotto got $7 million.

Pacquiao was favored, largely off his last two performances in which he forced De La Hoya to quit on his stool and then knocked out Hatton with a huge left hook in the second round. Some in boxing, including Roach, thought Cotto had been slowed by his devastating loss last year to Antonio Margarito and would be further slowed by having to come in 2 pounds lower than his normal weight.

That wasn't the case early in the fight, with Cotto winning the first round and fighting well. Once he was knocked down by a big left hand late in the fourth round, though, he slowed noticeably.

PAIRE

From Page 28

the ball which found the back of the net, as no one was there to deflect the kick.

Tan Holding FC-1 had several opportunities to tie the game, but Paire kept its guard up to stay on top.

Paire is coached by Glenn Jewell and Brenda Schultz. Other members of the champion team are goalie Kautong Omengkar, team captain Hunter Jewell, Danny Auther, William Hinson, Kenyon Schultz, Joel Fruit, David Park, Taiga Sakai, and David Yang. Also included on Paire's roster, but did not play in the weekend's finals were Delin Reusora, Benjamin Sebangiol, Fred Kim, and Tae Min Jeong.

Paire and Tan Holdings FC-1 advanced to the title match after edging separate foes in the semifinals. Paire edged Matansa Football Club,1-0, on Jewell's goal in the last minute of the first half. The other semis pairing saw Tan Holdings FC-1 stunning the league-leader MP United-Blue in a shootout, 3-2.

Tan Holdings FC-1 took the last semis ticket in the boys' U13 and was seeded fourth in the playoffs. Paire was ranked second behind spring champion MP United Blue, while Matansa was seeded third. MP United-Blue settled for third place after beating Matansa in a shootout, 4-0. Scoring for MP United-Blue were Jake Lee, Angelo Jones, Jeyn Joyner, and Andrew Johnson. Kennedy Izuka made one goal in regulation, while Matansa's Josiah Orlando also had one to tie the game.

In the round-robin girls U13 championship round, Matansa won over MP United and Paire for its back-to-back titles. Matansa also ruled the spring league of the youth event.

Doreen Ravell led Matansa to its second straight championship and she later took the Golden Boot award for making the most goals this season with four. MP United-Blue' Joyner claimed the Golden Boot award in the boys' category with his 12 goals.

ARCHERS

From Page 28

E&E led in the first period, 19-15, before the Archers took the driver's seat at halftime, 35-30. Neither team led by more than 10 points in the first half before the Archers pulled away midway in the third canto.

The game was tied last at 40-all tally until Rommel Usi, Noel David, and Rommel Quinitip joined forces in the Archers 14-1 windup in the remaining five minutes of the third period to enter the final canto with a crucial 13-point lead, 54-41. E&E's lone point was courtesy of Francis Serrano's free throw.

David and Quinitip drilled four points apiece, while Usi nailed six in that run, as the trio was too fast for E&E's tall, but slower frontliners and erratic guards in the third canto.

An 8-0 start in the fourth period kept E&E's title defense bid alive, as it moved within five, 49-54. However, timely baskets from Quinitip helped the Archers maintain their distance.

E&E made one final push on its attempt to retain the championship when it cut the lead to six, 60-66, going into the last three minutes of the game, but back-to-back passing errors in fastbreak plays sealed the doom for the erstwhile champion.

Later in the evening, the newly crowned champions Archers received their trophy in a brief awards ceremony. The top individual performers were also recognized Saturday night.

The Archers' Robert Guiang was named Finals MVP, while Jaypers' Bon Tamayo took the regular season MVP plum. Tamayo was also selected to the Mythical Team, joining E&E's Ed Cosino and Alex Ocampo, David, and the Diamond Fixers' J.R. Barrios.

The Archers' J.R. Pineda was named Best Coach, while Victor Mallari took the Most Improved Player award. Four other individuals were also honored for topping various statistics. They were George De Guzman (rebounds), Badong Camacho (shotblocks), Dante Olivos (assists), and Ronald Delos Reyes (scoring).

China Town claimed the Sportsmanship Award, while Diamond Fixers went home with the third place trophy.

Finals

Mekeni Archers 67 – Guiang 17, R. Usi 15, Quinitip 11, Mendoza 11, David 11, M. Usi 2.

E&E 62 – Bicera 21, Ocampo 14, Cosino 11, Francisco 8, Dizon 5, Morales 2, Serrano 1.

Scoring by quarters: 15-19, 35-30, 54-41, 67-62.

HYATT

From Page 28

win over NTT Docomo on Friday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Hyatt recorded the pennant-clinching win in front of a few IT&E players who watched the game hoping for a Docomo victory. Hyatt finished the regular season with a 10-1 mark, tying IT&E for the No. 1 spot. However, the Ray Lizama-coached Hyatt won the tiebreak as it prevailed over the host in their lone meeting in the regular season, 112-100.

A 9-0 start anchored on Dave Sablan's fastbreak layups gave Hyatt control of the game and it led by as much as 13 in the second period before Docomo cut the lead to as low as four points in the fourth period.

Sablan finished with 10 points in the first quarter, while Ronald Delos Reyes nailed two triples before leaving the game due to a sprained left ankle he sustained after colliding with Docomo's Kelvin Fitial.

Sablan and Delos Reyes' early explosion gave Hyatt a 22-15 lead at the end of the first period and Docomo played catch-up from then on.

A quick 5-0 run at the beginning of the fourth period on Teregeyo's layup and Wowie Abuel's triple moved Docomo within four, 57-61. However, Sablan and Gino Libu answered with a 10-0 scoring binge to bring the lead back to double digits, 71-61, going into the final half of that canto.

Hyatt hung in there en route to an 11-point win and the top seeding in the eight-team playoffs.

Sablan played like a man possessed in Hyatt's last game of the regular season, as he exploded for 43 points. Bernard Aquino had 14 markers, while Libuw and Lizama chipped in 10 apiece.

Docomo ended up with a 7-4 mark to remain in third place.

In the first game, Tinian improved to a 6-4 record after outgunning Commonwealth Health Center, 86-83. Tinian played its last game on Saturday against Micronesian Brokers, Inc. but the result was unavailable at press time. Winner of that match will occupy the No. 4 spot.

Tinian and CHC had a shootout with the former's Tony Borja and Leo Pascua trading shots from downtown against the latter's Edgar Pangelinan and Tom Diaz. In the end, Borja's back-to-back triples spelled the difference and lift Tinian to a three-point win.

Borja drilled 29 points, making 27 of them from beyond the arc, while Pascua had two and finished with 13 points.

Pangelinan buried five triples and had a team-high 29 points, while Diaz nailed four treys and collected 19 markers. With the loss, CHC dropped to a 3-8 record and failed to advance to the next round.

First Game

Tinian 86 – T. Borja 28, J. Santos 14, Pascua 13, R. Reyes 13, Fernandez 8, P. Manglona 6, K. Borja 2, K. Manglona 2.

CHC 83 – Pangelinan 29, Diaz 19, Lisua 16, Siedler 9, Brostom 6.

Scoring by quarters: 17-21, 43-35, 63-56, 86-83.

Second Game

Hyatt 87 – Sablan 43, Aquino 14, Lizama 10, Libuw 10, Delos Reyes 8, Mendoza 2.

Docomo 76 – Fitial 23, Teregeyo 21, Bernardo 14, Abuel 10, Lee 6, R. Alvarez 2, C. Alvarez 2.

Scoring by quarters: 22-15, 44-32, 61-52, 87-76.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	8	3	.727	_
Toronto	5	4	.556	2
Philadelphia	4	6	.400	3 1/2
New York	1	9	.100	6 1/2
New Jersey	0	10	.000	7 1/2

Southeast Division

Atlanta	8	2	.800	_
Miami	7	2	.778	1/2
Orlando	7	3	.700	1
Charlotte	3	6	.333	4 1/2
Washington	2	7	.222	5 1/2

Central Division

Milwaukee	5	2	.714	1/2
Cleveland	7	3	.700	_
Indiana	4	3	.571	1Ω
Chicago	5	4	.556	1 1/2
Detroit	5	4	.556	1Ω

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	6	3	.667	_
Houston	5	4	.556	1
San Antonio	4	4	.500	1 1/2
New Orleans	3	8	.273	4
Memphis	2	8	.200	4 1/2

Northwest Division

Portland	8	3	.727	_
Denver	7	3	.700	1/2
Oklahoma City	5	4	.556	2
Utah	4	6	.400	3 1/2
Minnesota	1	10	.091	7

Pacific Division

Phoenix	8	2	.800	_
L.A. Lakers	7	2	.778	1/2
Sacramento	5	4	.556	2 1/2
Golden State	3	6	.333	4 1/2
L.A. Clippers	3	7	.300	5

Yesterday's Games

Indiana 113, Boston 104
Detroit 106, Washington 103
Atlanta 121, New Orleans 98
Portland 80, Charlotte 74
Cleveland 107, Utah 103
Miami 81, New Jersey 80
Chicago 94, Philadelphia 88
Memphis 97, Minnesota 87
Milwaukee 129, Golden State 125
Oklahoma City 101, San Antonio 98

AUSTRALIAN MASTERS SCORES

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Scores Sunday after the final round of the Australian Masters, a $1.39 million PGA Tour of Australasia tournament at the par-72, 6,455-meter (7,059-yard) Kingston Heath Golf Club (a-denotes amateur):

FINAL ROUND

Tiger Woods, United States	66-68-72-68–274
Greg Chalmers, Australia	68-69-69-70–276
Francois Delamontagne, France	71-70-68-69–278
Jason Dufner, United States	70-67-71-70–278
James Nitties, Australia	66-71-69-73–279
Adam Scott, Australia	71-71-69-69–280
Cameron Percy, Australia	67-72-69-72–280
Stuart Appleby, Australia	69-70-71-71–281
Alejandro Canizares, Spain	73-72-69-68–282
Craig Scott, Australia	71-72-70-69–282
Klas Eriksson, Sweden	71-73-66-72–282
Alistair Presnell, Australia	72-73-66-72–283
Ashley Hall, Australia	69-69-72-73–283
Bernd Wiesberger, Austria	72-67-72-73–284
Rod Pampling, Australia	71-70-70-73–284
Michael Sim, Australia	70-71-69-74–284
Aaron Baddeley, Australia	73-68-76-68–285
Leigh McKechnie, Australia	73-71-69-72–285
Seve Benson, England	71-71-70-73–285
Tim Wilkinson, New Zealand	71-71-67-76–285
Steven Jones, Australia	72-75-70-69–286
Pelle Edberg, Sweden	71-73-71-71–286
Steven Bowditch, Australia	71-68-75-72–286
Mathew Goggin, Australia	68-70-74-74–286
Scott Laycock, Australia	72-68-70-76–286
Adam Bland, Australia	72-75-73-67–287
Heath Reed, Australia	77-68-74-68–287
Craig Spence, Australia	72-75-72-68–287
Kurt Barnes, Australia	70-73-75-69–287
Richard Bland, England	71-73-73-70–287
Richard Green, Australia	72-71-72-72–287
Geoff Ogilvy, Australia	72-73-71-72–288
David McKenzie, Australia	70-72-73-73–288
Matthew Griffin, Australia	71-75-69-73–288
Manny Villegas, Columbia	70-68-76-74–288
Craig Parry, Australia	70-76-73-70–289
Ewan Porter, Australia	71-76-70-72–289
Peter O'Malley, Australia	71-74-71-73–289
Michael Long, New Zealand	71-75-70-73–289
Gary Murphy, Ireland	71-73-71-74–289
Branden Grace, South Africa	66-75-73-75–289
Rick Kulacz, Australia	69-76-69-75–289
Wade Ormsby, Australia	71-69-73-76–289
Aaron Townsend, Australia	75-72-74-69–290
Matthew Millar, Australia	71-76-72-71–290
Lee Slattery, England	69-74-75-72–290
John Senden, Australia	73-69-75-73–290
Andrew Tampion, Australia	71-75-71-73–290
Andre Stolz, Australia	71-74-70-75–290
Peter Nolan, Australia	68-72-74-76–290
Ryan Haller, Australia	70-74-76-71–291
Paul Sheehan, Australia	73-72-74-72–291
Doug Holloway, New Zealand	67-74-77-73–291
Peter Wilson, Australia	73-73-72-73–291
Michael Wright, Australia	73-73-71-74–291
Sam Little, England	71-71-73-76–291
Marcus Fraser, Australia	74-73-76-69–292
a-Matthew Giles, Australia	74-69-77-72–292
Marc Leishman, Australia	72-73-74-73–292
Terry Pilkadaris, Australia	75-72-72-73–292
Adam Groom, Australia	73-70-75-74–292
Callum Macaulay, Scotland	75-71-71-75–292
Andrew Bonhomme, Australia	73-74-73-73–293
Anthony Brown, Australia	72-72-72-77–293
Josh Younger, Australia	72-73-71-77–293
Terry Price, Australia	73-72-80-69–294
Miles Tunnicliff, England	74-72-75-73–294
Jason Norris, Australia	73-74-71-76–294
Mahal Pearce, New Zealand	71-68-77-79–295
Aaron Pike, Australia	74-73-72-77–296
Rohan Blizard, Australia	69-76-77-75–297
Frank Power, Australia	74-70-76-78–298
Andrew Tschudin, Australia	73-72-74-79–298
Damien Jordan, Australia	69-78-79-73–299
Simon Furneaux, Australia	73-74-77-75–299
Kim Felton, Australia	76-71-77-76–300
Ryan Hammond, Australia	75-72-77-78–302

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

GOVT/BIZ CAGE STANDINGS

Hyatt	10	1
IT&E	10	1
Docomo	7	4
PSS	7	4
Tinian	6	4
MBI	6	4
CPA	6	5
CHC	3	8
BOG	4	7
DCCA	4	7
Customs	2	9
ARFF	0	11

The Week in Sports

Eagles sweep highlights week

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Eagles landed, not once, but twice.

Grace Christian Academy made the sports headlines again after ruling the high school division of the 2009-2010 Coalition of Private Schools on Saipan Volleyball League. A week ago, the Eagles' junior high school division also triumphed in the same league, beating Mt. Carmel School in three sets, 25-11, 13-25, 15-13.

The Eagles' high school team faced a different foe in Marianas Baptist Academy-A in Friday's finals and swept their way to the championship via a 25-19, 25-15 win.

The title was the Eagles sixth straight, making GCA a force in the six-school league.

Also leaving a mark in her sport was long-distance runner Mamiko Oshima-Berger, who was runner-up in the Pacific Islands Club Guam International Half Marathon on Sunday in Tamuning, Guam.

The Saipan-based Oshima-Berger completed the 20-kilometer race in one hour, 34 minutes, and 20 seconds, passing the 1:35:00 mark she recorded in a tournament in Japan last year. Less than a month ago, Oshima-Berger competed in the 2009 Guam Gatorade Ko'ko' Road Race and ruled the women's sub-masters division with a time of 1:38:38.

Oshima-Berger was the seventh overall finisher among the 177 runners and reached the finish line of the PIC event ahead of three male Saipan runners.

Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel was 10th overall and second in the 30 to 39 age group with his 1:38:14. Mamiko's husband, Joshua, and Fred Camacho were the two other Saipan runners who joined the weekend race. Camacho clocked in at 1:54:57, while Berger recorded 2:11:54 in the 50-and-above age group.

Back in the local scene, the 2009 Saipan Rotary Club Youth Basketball League continued to play multiple games in one playing day to ensure that the youth caging will complete its regular season by the end of this month.

After three months of being winless, the Celtics finally claimed its first victor in the Rotary caging, following a 50-40 triumph over Hi-Five. The Celtics made it two in a row after stunning Rollers I, 44-36.

Also winning last week were the G-Stars (7-0), Runnin' Rebels (5-4), Sonics (8-2), and Sixers (7-1).

Still in basketball, IT&E Inter-Government/Business Basketball League completed its regular season with Hyatt Regency Saipan taking the pennant after an 87-76 win against NTT Docomo on Friday.

Hyatt finished the regular season with a 10-1 record, tying host IT&E, but the former won in the tiebreak due to the winner-over-the-other rule. Hyatt topped IT&E in overtime in their lone meeting in the regular season, 112-100.

Also concluding last week was Basketball Association of Northern Mariana Islands' Level 1 coaching clinic.

Completing the course and receiving certificates from BANMI were Hopwood Junior High School's Felisha Brel and Vanessa Mobel, Lerins Tamtreng, Runnin' Rebels Tyrone Omar, Dominic Joseph Omar Tudela, Sylvan Luis Rangamar, San Antonio Elementary School's Ron Olopai, Epi Cabrera, Timothy Williams, Gabriel White, the Sonics' Omar Ajoste, and former CNMI Nationals stalwart Dan Barcinas.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Hyatt Regency Saipan's Bernard Aquino, center, dribbles out of the defense of NTT Docomo's James Lee, left and Kae Bernardo during their game in the govt/business caging on Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The G-Stars' Rodney Salas, left, challenges the defense of Rollers II's Shane Metran during the first quarter of their game in the Rotary caging last week at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The GCA Eagles celebrate their title win in the high school division of the 2009-2010 Coalition of Private Schools on Saipan Volleyball League on Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The GCA Eagles' Brandon Chargualaf serves during their title match against MBA-A in the high school division of the 2009-2010 Coalition of Private Schools on Saipan Volleyball League on Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan's Mamiko Oshima-Berger, left, is all smiles as she poses with fellow runner Vicki Daniel during the award ceremony for the Pacific Islands Club Guam International 5K /10K / Half Marathon on Sunday in Tamuning.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants in the BANMI-organized Level 1 coaching clinic have a discussion during a break in the month-long seminar.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

BANMI president and development officer Elias Rangamar, left, presents a Level 1 coaching certificate to Ron Olopai in a brief ceremony at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last week.

Eagles sweep highlights week

Grace Christian Academy made the sports headlines again after ruling the high school division of the 2009-2010 Coalition of Private Schools on Saipan Volleyball League. 27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Tiger puts on a show to win Down Under

Tiger Woods gave record crowds at Kingston Heath what they wanted to see—exquisite shots and a closing round of 4-under 68 to win the Australian Masters on Sunday for his seventh victory of the year. 25

Pacquiao stops Cotto to win 7th title

By TIM DAHLBERG
AP BOXING WRITER

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Manny Pacquiao's speed and power were way too much for Miguel Cotto's heart.

Pacquiao put on yet another dominating performance Saturday night, knocking down Cotto twice and turning his face into a bloody mess before finally stopping him at 55 seconds of the 12th round.

The Filipino star used his blazing speed and power from both hands to win his seventh title in seven weight classes and cement his stature as the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world. Cotto took such a beating that his face was a river of red from the fury of Pacquiao's punches, but he refused to quit even as his corner tried to throw in the towel after the 11th round.

"I didn't know from where the punches were coming," Cotto said.

The fight was billed as a 145-pound classic, and in the early rounds it didn't disappoint. The two went after each other with a vengeance and Cotto more than held his own as they traded punches in the center of the ring before a roaring sellout crowd at the

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AP

Manny Pacquiao, of the Philippines, celebrates at the finish of his WBO welterweight boxing title fight against Miguel Cotto, of Puerto Rico, Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009 in Las Vegas.

Hyatt secures pennant in govt caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Hyatt Regency Saipan bagged the pennant in the IT&E Inter-Government/Business Basketball League, following an 87-76

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Hyatt Regency Saipan's Dave Sablan, right, drives and draws a foul from NTT Docomo's Wowie Abuel during their game in the govt/business caging on Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Paire, Matansa rule NMIFA U13 league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Paire Football Club capitalized on Tan Holdings FC-1's defensive lapse in the second half to eke out a 1-0 win in their title game in the boys' U13 division of the 2009 NMIFA Youth Football Fall League on Saturday at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

Won Jun Kim scored the winning goal in the seventh minute of the second half to hand Paire the championship trophy. Kim and two other Paire strikers were inside the penalty box battling Tan Holdings FC-1 for the leather. The Tan Holdings FC-1 goalie then joined the scene, leaving their goal unguarded. Kim then hit

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Paire Football Club's Won Jun Kim in action during their title game against Tan Holdings FC-1 in the boys' U13 division of the NMIFA league on Saturday at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

Archers dethrone E&E in Gualo Rai caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 2nd Annual Miller Lite/Gualo Rai Friendship Basketball League has a new champion in the Mekeni Archers.

The Archers took this season's title, following a 67-62 victory in the finals against inaugural champion E&E on Saturday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

A third-quarter surge allowed the Archers to break away from a neck-and-neck first half and dethrone E&E, which won last year's finals against Miller Lite.

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Mekeni Archers pose with their championship trophy and organizers of the 2nd Annual Miller Lite/Gualo Rai Friendship Basketball League during the awards ceremony on Saturday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.